

Flesh & Bone

The indigenous Essence of the Nepali
language Beyond Sanskritization

आमागरी व शहरि वालल श्वास्तगित
रुग्ण वानुसल्लिखाना नित्तावगति
भवे पनडिपन्नरुग्णदेरि मन्त्रवारानिष
मवल तत्त्वित्ततरिनारिणो सगं व
तवान समसारगीरति बतेर्येता
सनद्धितोसब्धि । सुखसुखं रंननिर
तएव सुखे लसत नर मोक्ष
गम्यन्तरी

बासी बमरनदीगवलीययाव
तनो रक्ता सपमकोठभुलि
वत । बेली शम्भुविवाह
वयविनिमय समलतादे
वत नित्तिवनि युद्धिगमा
गपावयवर वयवबिबेक

गद्गद्भावः सोप । यो विरयुलिः
सुखमिष्वैवतनः स्मरवुनारितल
समारुग्णविरालते द्वाता जनवातुते
नस्तयमानेवायवीतो फेहे सवाव
सुवावे मञ्जुकावररि तुङ्गावसिन
सवत्तमियासिधाम मराहातते दलले
सुनावैमविववाअमती न वाधि

Dr. Nawa Raj Subba

Flesh and Bone:

The indigenous Essence of the Nepali Language Beyond Sanskritisation

Dr. Nawa Raj Subba



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Preface

Language is not just a way to exchange thoughts. It's the record of our history, a mirror reflecting power structures in society, and now, a shield for the protection of our identities in this digital world. For a very long time, however, a ridiculously narrow view has been projected on academic grounds: that the Nepali language only exists, flourishes and looks as it does due to the benevolent influence of Sanskrit. In this book, *Bones and Skin: The Indigenous Essence of the Nepali Language Beyond Sanskritisation*, Dr. Nawa Raj Subba presents a detailed critique of this perspective, exploring how the language has been shaped over time.

The author's research strays beyond the dull, rigid domain of the formal linguistics discipline and instead brings to focus how the language actually breathes within the complex reality of our society, culture, world politics, and today's technological sphere. Courageously and with the honesty of the scholar, the author provokes a necessary discourse about freeing the Nepali language from its historical internal hegemonic influences. Through twenty-two insightful chapters, the author unearths irrefutable evidence that the Nepali language was not only created, moulded and refined by a ruling class or a particular caste, but its very root and foundation stem from the oral traditions, indigenous cultures, and the daily life of the local people, such as the Magars, Tibeto-Burmans, and Limbus from the east.

One of the most rebellious and interesting questions asked by the author concerns the politics of spelling and script. He argues that the incessant debates held within various institutions and governing bodies over grammar and orthography are no longer questions of a misplaced dot or a slight rule but rather the highly politicised attempt of the educated elites to remove the innate indigenous charm from pure Nepali and reinstall the utter monopoly of Sanskrit.

The later chapters, making this work immensely timely and urgent, tackle the results of the National Census 2021 (2078 BS) in detail. The author draws from these figures to reveal an unfortunate fact: that even though Nepal officially is a multilingual nation (according to the census), its government, legal and administrative systems operate almost entirely in one singular language. Indigenous languages have often been overlooked in our courts and offices, and the author advocates for the implementation of a three-language policy as well as court translators for ensuring fair justice to all users. Going forward, the author also explores how digital archives and machine translation can help in promoting indigenous, local knowledge to the global level.

In a word, this book serves to liberate the Nepali language from the control of the purists to whom it belongs exclusively, a narrow few, and it glorifies Nepali for its true identity as a beautiful, multicoloured and indigenous tongue. The book is indeed going to be a milestone.

Author's Note

The most painful way in the world is for someone to sit down and write a book challenging the number one professors in their field and top scholars in their own country. It really requires a different type of courage. As an author, completing this book was a true voyage of unlearning for me. I was raised in the same educational system that taught us that in order to appear smart, Nepali had to be heavily laden with Sanskrit. However, as my study moved away from those dry textbooks and towards the genuine, everyday lives of regular people, the state's fabricated history began to shatter right in front of my eyes.

This book is about the biology of language: the skin and bones. In essence, if we delve deeper into the actual structural behaviour of Nepali – such as the split ergative marking with the '-le' suffix, spontaneous nasalisation, a vibrant echo-word system and existential meanings from the verbs 'ho' and 'chha' – we can find the raw skeletal structure of the Tibeto-Burman substrate. The superficial and dense infiltration of Sanskrit Tatsam words – a deliberate act of academic and political elitism – is merely the "skin" worn on top. For centuries, our entire educational machinery has been fooled by this "skin" and completely failed to notice the authentic "bones" holding it upright.

This book is very consciously structured to move back and forth between history and present-day digitally mediated reality. It is from the 11th-century stone inscription in the kingdom of Sinja all the way up to the statistics of 2078 BS (Nepal National Census) and beyond into the digital future of 2026. Linguistic justice is simply not possible if it remains stuck in the past. If our traditional knowledge must thrive, it must "gain computer citizenship", be encoded with Unicode, form parallel datasets, and be made available in open-access AI libraries.

My intent here is not to criticise anyone or the classical beauty of any language. What I want to bring to the foreground through this book is the critique of linguistic hegemony, that structurally used tool of internal colonialism to suppress the variety of oral traditions in Nepal. I am simply trying to democratise our speech. I leave this book to the reader, hoping for an easy-flowing, meaningful dialogue about these difficult issues instead of a rigid list of grammatical structures.

— Dr. Nawa Raj Subba

Book Introduction

The fundamental flaw of the new Nepali identity, as manifested through manufactured amnesia, is that under the umbrella ideology of 'Ek Bhasa, Ek Bhash, Ek Desh' (One language, one vesture, one country), the state machinery post-unification of Nepal systematically manipulated the national language (Khas Kura/Nepali) in a bid to force an artificial homogeneity on an intrinsically pluralistic topography. Through this state project, it concurrently suppressed the indigenous languages (Adivasi Janajati tongues) of the land while also 'cleaning' the national language of its indigenous vernacular constituents, replacing them with an elitist, Sanskritised lexicon.

Flesh and Bone: The Indigenous Essence of the Nepali Language Beyond Sanskritisation is an exhaustive socio-linguistic discourse aimed at dismantling this elite overlay, and using the theoretical framework of decolonial analysis, a historical-sociological triangulation and a qualitative narrative enquiry method, it charts the deep-layered evolution of Nepali from prehistoric times under the Sinja empire to its current, highly politicised transnational status.

Chapter Outline and Structural Design: The book's 22 chapters are intricately laid out in the following design.

Chapter 1 offers an academic primer of how Khas Kura became the national language, documenting orthographic battles over time right up until recent institutional decisions between the years 2073 and 2081 BS.

Chapter 2 examines the socio-historically linked relationship of the Khas language and the Magar tribe, illustrating the blending of the ethnic and linguistic categories using the theories of identity fluidity in the writings of Fredrik Barth and the substratum theory of Antoine Meillet.

Chapters 3 and 17 provide an overview of the deep structural, phonetic and semantic impacts on Nepali from the Tibeto-Burmese languages and an exploration of 101 jargon words from vernacular speech that highlight the historical depth of the indigenous languages of the land.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 look into the politics of alphabetic reformations and the Sanskritisation movement as it masquerades as purification. Dr. Subba deciphers the way that institutions such as the Pragya Pratisthan leverage the Tatsam Sanskrit component to perpetuate a system of internal colonialism, illustrating the harmful implications with examples from recent administrative abuses such as the controversy regarding Koshi Province nomenclature.

Chapters 7 and 16 re-examine the Jharro movement with a new decolonial angle and discuss the efforts and sacrifices of individuals such as Balkrishna Pokharel in their struggles to preserve Khas originality and criticise the transmission of academic hegemony across generations.

Chapters 8, 9 and 11 describe the main theoretical argument of the book: the Bones and Skin paradigm. By analysing the archaic stones of Damupal's inscription (1038 BS) and the philosophy of Mundhumian thought, these chapters focus on the existential verb meanings of 'ho' and 'chha' as a testament to a primal indigenous revolution in being and consciousness.

Chapters 10 and 15 deal with the structural and material constraints facing implementation of language policies locally; this section analyses the geopolitics of the Devanagari script, the politics of printing, and a detailed case study of the Limbu language in Eastern Nepal.

Chapters 12, 13 and 14 place these struggles within the context of global issues such as UNESCO's role in indigenous language preservation as well as examine the relationship between written Nepali poetry and the Limbu poetic forms (Hakpare, Palam and Khyali).

Chapters 18 and 19 offer a strict quantitative and legal analysis of the latest National Census of 2078 BS, revealing the sustained oppression and marginalisation of indigenous languages by our courts and institutions despite the constitutional framework on pluralism.

Chapters 20, 21 and 22 are focused on the future, where this study looks at how machine translation and artificial intelligence can advance local knowledge systems; it tracks how the global Nepali diaspora creates the global Himalayan decolonial identity through writing and utilising the vernacular and provides a clear pedagogical blueprint to restore the "Indigenous pulse" for psychopolitical liberation among the modern youth.

Finally, this is much more than a book of grammar rules. It is a political and personal investigation into the power and vulnerability inherent in language – in our own survival and mental liberties. I hope this book motivates teachers, legislators, and readers to stop settling for token, surface-level diversity and instead do the hard work of creating a world in which every language and voice is accorded the respect and dignity it deserves.

Theme 1: Historical Origins and Indigenous Foundations

[1] From Khaskura to National Language: An Academic Review of the Origin, Development, Controversies, and Contemporary Confusions of the Nepali Language

Summary

The Nepali language is a significant member of the Aryan subgroup of the Indo-Aryan language family. It has a written tradition of over one thousand years. The article intends to critically examine, from a scientific point of view, the real history of Nepali, its origin, development, and commonly believed fallacies regarding Nepali with the help of linguistic archaeology and comparative historical linguistic methods. This article proposes that Nepali originated from the Khas language (Pokhrel, 2024). It is widely assumed to have originated from the Sinja Valley. The history of the Khas language and the literary standardisation of it are emphasised too. The Dullu inscription (1038 AD), the earliest evidence of the Nepali script, is emphasised as significant evidence (Upadhyay, 2021). The misconceptions about the Nepali language, 'it is just Gorkhali' and 'it is just a dialect of Hindi', were also challenged in this article. In the midst of a dispute on script and grammar construction, the recent order of the Supreme Court appears to set the scientific responsibility for the public towards the natural preservation of language (Supreme Court of Nepal, 2024). Concludes that the history of the Nepali language is natural, participatory and adaptive.

Keywords: Nepali language, Khaskura, Khas Prakrit, Indo-European family, Dullu inscriptions, linguistic movement, communication language, linguistic confusion, standardisation, spelling controversy.

1. Introduction

Language is one of the roots of the identity of a nation. We all use language for the purpose of expressing ourselves, our feelings and our culture. Nepali Bhasa is the national tongue of Nepal. It is also the language used in government work in the country, and that has been declared in the constitution of Nepal. Furthermore, Nepali is also one of the 23 official languages as described in the Eighth Schedule in India (Rai, 2019).

A large number of people are not aware of the proper development and history of the Nepali language. Different myths have been prevailing about its history, such as some people believing that Nepali is one of the dialects of the Hindi language, while some people call it the Gorkha dialect only. But the linguistic survey does not accept all these things (Subedi, 2016).

This article has been prepared for literate readers to describe the history of the Nepali language in an easily comprehensible way. The main aim of the article is to throw light on the scientific history of the origin, development and wrong understanding of the Nepali language.

From a dialect, it had become Gorkhali or Parbate and, finally, Nepali, and it had been very interesting. During its history, there have been many political, cultural, and social changes, which will be discussed in the article. Before starting with the history, it is important to point out that the Nepali language was never the property of one single group of people or the land but a common means of communication formed through the mixture of various races, languages and cultures (Resist, 2026).

2. Justification

It would be quite beneficial to compile a scientific history of the Nepali language for quite a lot of reasons: To start with, the Nepali language itself can be seen as a formula for national integrity. But quite a few untruthful facts about Nepali are prevalent in non-academic sectors of the community that cause people to think in the wrong way.

To add more to this, recent times have witnessed some unscientific ventures to amend orthography and language policy by government departments and a few academic institutions, which have been an enormous cause of conflict among linguists. According to the statement made by Dr. Devi Prasad Subedi (2016) in his paper, the upper administrative layers of education have taken steps to modify orthography and grammar without any basis, which has bred confusion in the minds of students.

Thirdly, it is due to the absence of discussing the inherent characteristics and history of the Nepali language that superstitions are still misleading the public. Hence, it is extremely important to document the journey of the Nepali language scientifically. Finally, it is very convenient to divide the evolution of the Nepali language into three distinct chronological periods that can be analysed using linguistic archaeology and the comparative method, all of which are laid out in this article. Thus, this article is essentially an educational as well as public responsibility to debunk the myths.

3. Theoretical framework

Two major theoretical foundations are utilised in this article. Both are quite famous and widely utilised in the field of international linguistics.

First principles: Historical-Comparative Linguistics

According to this theory, all the languages in the world have been developed from a single root language in the past, which branched out into many languages. For instance, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Persian, English, and Nepali all came into existence from the Proto-Indo-European root language. This theory helps the linguists in deciding the rules of change of sounds (sound laws). For example, there is a common change from Sanskrit "dwar" to Nepali "dhoka", Sanskrit "danta" to Nepali "daant", etc. The well-known scholars like Sir George Grierson and Suniti Kumar Chatterjee used this principle in classifying the Nepali language in the Pahari subgroup under the Indo-European family in the Aryan branch (Grierson, 1909, as cited in Pokhrel, 2024).

Second theory: Linguistic archaeology

The written evidence, inscriptions, copper plates and historical documents have been analysed in this theory. The root assumption of this theory is that language is not something static but a product of culture, politics and geography. This principle helps in the study of the Nepali language a great deal. The ancient Nepali inscription (Dullu inscription) serves as important evidence of the development of the Nepali language. This principle says that the inscriptions in Nepali words should not be studied with present-day assumptions; rather, they show the pronunciation and script of the past.

On the basis of these two principles, this article would discuss the development journey of the Nepali language.

4. Research Methodology

This is a completely descriptive, historical-interpretative article. The research is complete. The following procedures were followed in its preparation.

Source Data:

- Primary facts: analysed (11th-century Dullu inscription, Khas kingdom's copper plates and other historical documents), analysing its linguistic expressions as the base (Upadhyay, 2021).
- Secondary facts: textbooks used include different books, contemporary scientific articles, books from universities, the latest Supreme Court decision, academic journals, etc. Mainly used as a reference is Subedi's 'Cultivation of Delusion in Nepali Language' (2073, Nagarik Dainik), which is the reference for contemporary observation. Also gave utmost priority to the whole text of the decision given on 2081 Asar 9. (Supreme Court of Nepal, 2024)

Procedure of Analysis:

- This article has used a comparative and analytical method. The available facts are arranged systematically; comparison is carried out among them in ancient and modern form.
- The confusions are pointed out separately, and clarification has been made regarding each misconception from facts.
- Dispute of linguistic right to regulation has been given importance in special note with the Supreme Court's decision.

This procedure has made the article scientific, impartial and factual.

5. Presentation and analysis

Here, all aspects of the Nepali language, from its beginnings to the current controversies, are presented point-wise. Each point has sub-points that will be elaborated upon.

5.1 Prehistoric origins of the Nepali language: a pursuit of Khas Prakrit

The genesis of the Nepali language is believed to have roots in the Khas culture. The term 'Khas' appears in the oldest Indian texts. The 'Manusmriti' (circa 100 B.C.) refers to the Khas as the 'Vratya Kshatriya' (degenerate Kshatriya) caste, and Kalhana's 'Rajtarangini' (1148 A.D.) details the Khas kingdom and its language. (Sharma, n.d.)

But the question is: is the Nepali language itself derived from Sanskrit? The answer is NO. The linguists assert that the Nepali language originated from a mediaeval language called 'Prakrit'. Among the Prakrits, 'Khas Prakrit' is believed to be the ancestor of the Nepali language. (Pokhrel, 2024, March 19)

Where was the Khas Prakrit prevalent? It was prevalent in the valley of Karnali-Bheri from far western to midwestern Nepal. The capital of this kingdom was 'Sija' (present-day Sinja of Jumla). According to Grierson in his 'Linguistic Survey of India' (1909), it was identified as 'Khaskura' or 'Western Hilly'.

From this, Khasukura developed three subsequent branches:

1. Western Hills (Doteli, Kumaoni, Garhwali)
2. Central Hilly (some dialects of Karnali and Gandaki regions)
3. Eastern Pahadi (which gradually evolved into modern standard 'Nepali')

Therefore, the Nepali language did not emerge directly from Vedic Sanskrit. It evolved from Khas Prakrit. This explains the distinction between the Nepali and Hindi languages that evolved from 'Shauraseni Prakrit' (Timsina, 2021).

5.2 Oldest written evidence of the Nepali language: Dullu inscription

When did the documented history of the Nepali language begin? This evidence was found in the Dullu area of Dailekh district. This is called the 'Damupal inscription' or 'Dullu inscription'. Historians claim this inscription was crafted in the year 1038 B.S. (981 A.D.) (Upadhyay, 2021).

This inscription is more than just an ordinary piece of stone; it contains a rich repository of the history of the Khas kingdom, along with an accurate account of the chronology of rulers of that time. Importantly for us, it is written in an old dialect of the modern Nepali language.

The Nepali equivalent sentence states, "Issue 9 of Damupal was written on Monday." Even though 'likhitam', found in this inscription, is of Sanskrit origin, the Old Nepali usage can be noted in the words 'ank' and 'navami' along with 'somavasare'.

As argued by Prof. Jagat Prasad Upadhyay, the inscription not only proves that the Nepali language existed in present-day Nepal but also in Kumaon towards the west, Garhwal towards the east, Sikkim towards the east and Bihar-Bengal towards the south (Upadhyay, 2021).

The Dullu inscription is not the only one found, as there are inscriptions belonging to the 11th century A.D. Onwards, such as the pillar inscription of Bamu Khadka and the copperplate inscription of Ashoka Challa, also written in the Khas language (Sharma, n.d.). This proves that the Nepali language has existed for over 1000 years.

5.3 Development of the Nepali language (three chronological stages)

The history of the Nepali language can be classified into three chronological stages. These are:

Stage 1: Primary Stage (circa 1000-1550 A.D.)

This was the golden age of the Khas kingdom. The Sija (Sinja) region was the capital of Karnali Province, which was under the Khas Malla dynasty. Their court language was 'Sanskrit', while the common language of administration and communication was 'Khaskura'.

Features of this stage:

- Numerous inscriptions and copperplates produced during this period.
- Influence of the Sanskrit language on Nepali, but with simple grammar.
- Comprehension difficult for modern Nepali speakers. (Resist, 2026)

Stage 2: Middle Stage (circa 1550-1900 A.D.)

Two key events marked this phase. The collapse of the Khas kingdom and the rise and spread of the Gorkha kingdom. Under Prithvi Narayan Shah, a ruler of a small hill kingdom, Nepal was unified in 1768-69 after the fall of Kantipur (Kathmandu). Afterwards, the control of eastern Nepal, Sikkim and part of India was taken over.

This step is very important from the linguistic viewpoint:

- Various terminologies were in vogue, such as 'Gorkhali' (language of the Gorkhas), 'Parvate', 'Pahadi' and 'Khas Kura'.
- Spread of language: The language spread all over Eastern Nepal, Sikkim, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Assam, Meghalaya and Burma with the invasion of the Gorkha army and administration.

- Beginning of literature standardisation: Bhanubhakta Acharya wrote the 'Bhanubhaktiya Ramayana' around 1880 using sweet, clear and simple Nepali. This writing contributed a lot towards the creation of Nepali literature. (Timsina, 2021)

- Writing grammar: Father A. Turnbull wrote 'Nepali Grammar' in 1888 in Darjeeling. (A Grammar of the Nepali Language) It was the first attempt at creating a unified grammar of the Nepali language.

Stage 3: Modern Stage (1900 A.D. – present)

During this stage, the development of the Nepali language became institutionalised. While Nepali was the court and judicial language even during the reign of Rana Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana (1846-1877), after the advent of democracy in 2007 B.S., it became stronger.

Significant points of this stage:

- Foundation of Pragma Pratishthan (2014): The national academy of Nepal, Pragma Pratishthan, is tirelessly working for the standardisation, literature and dictionary of the Nepali language.

- Contribution of the Ministry of Education: Numerous textbooks have been published so far by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) which have standardised Nepali writings and alphabets.

- Indian recognition: After Nepali was listed in the 8th schedule by the Indian government in 1991, it also became the official language of Sikkim, Darjeeling, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Manipur. (Rai, 2019; Soga, 2017)

It is thus clear that from a dialect prevalent in Khasakura, Sinja has developed to be spoken by more than 17 million people throughout the world and as a language listed amongst one hundred world languages by United Nations data.

5.4 Controversy over the naming of the Nepali language: From 'Gorkhali' to 'Nepali'

Most people get confused: are Gorkhali and Nepali two different languages? Actually these names have always been used as synonyms for a single language. When the Gorkha Kingdom extended itself, 'Gorkhali' became more popular for the government and the army to use. But the speakers of this language were not only Gorkhas (Bahun and Kshetris). The language was spoken by people of all castes, namely Bahun, Kshetri, Thakuri, Magar, Gurung, Rai, Limbu, Kami, Damai, Sarki, and Sunar. So to term this language as 'Gorkhali' is to minimise its multi-ethnic status. It came to be known as 'Nepali' in India around the end of the 19th century.

Influential writers who had fled to India from Nepal, like Parashuram (1890-1941) and Dharanidhar Koirala (1893-1980), adopted this new name as 'Nepali Bhasha'. In 2013, even the Constitution of Nepal renamed it 'Nepali Bhasha'. Slowly, the name 'Gorkhali' phased out, and 'Nepali' took over. (Resist, 2026)

Though few celebrated writers can be found to be using the term 'Gurkhali'. This, however, shows a lack of scholarly knowledge and ignorance.

5.5 Refutation of linguo-myth with empirical evidence

There are three myths prevalent about the Nepali language; below, they are answered with concrete evidence.

Myth 1: The Nepali language is solely spoken by the Gorkha caste (Bahun-Khetri).

Refutation: This is entirely false. The Nepali language, from its very inception, was an interlanguage. The language is spoken by the peoples of the hills, namely Magars, Gurungs, Rais, Limbus, Tamangs, Sherpas, Kamis, Damais, Sarkis and Gainas. The largest number of Nepali speakers are Kshetri people, but large communities of Rais and Magars are also speakers. Contribution to Nepali Literature by the

Dwija or Thakuri is only minimal compared to others. Many non-Dwija writers, like Padya Sherpa, Tika Atishi, etc., contribute the most to Nepali literature. Language is associated with neither the region nor the race.

Myth 2: The Nepali language is just another dialect of the Hindi language.

Refutation: It is a very popular misconception all over the plains of India. The truth is that both Nepali and Hindi belong to the Aryan languages, but they didn't originate from the same Prakrit. Nepali originated from Khas Prakrit, while Hindi originated from Shaurseni Prakrit. Words also differ. While in Hindi we have 'Aadmi' and 'Ladka', we have 'Manchhe' and 'Keto' in Nepali, which originated from different sources. 'Ghar', 'Chor', and 'Dolo' in Nepali but 'Makan', 'Chor', and 'Jhoola' in Hindi. Two distinct languages in all linguistic ways, not a dialect, which can be proved by different comparisons of words (Subedi, 2016).

Myth 3: The Nepali language is a recent (20th century) arrival in India.

Refutation: False. The traders and farmers speaking Nepali had been living in Darjeeling and Sikkim since the 17th century. As early as the 18th century, Christian missionaries started publishing religious texts in Nepali. Education started in Nepal as early as 1888 with the introduction of Turnbull's grammar in Darjeeling. Nepali speakers were counted in the Indian census of 1961. They got the status of an official national minority language of India with its inclusion in the 8th schedule in 1991. (Rai, 2019; Soga, 2017). Thus, Nepali is a native language of India, not a foreign language.

5.6 Orthography Controversies and Linguo-Authoritative body (2073-2081 BS)

The most urgent and current aspect in the life cycle of the Nepali language is the spelling controversy. A linguistic change has been ordered by a government body, seemingly of their own volition.

After the ruling by the Supreme Court dated 2081/03/09 (2024), the issue has been put in order (Supreme Court of Nepal, 2024).

Origin of controversy:

In BS 2069, the minister of education at the time made a decision and ordered spelling reform on books without consulting language experts. The examples suggested were to spell 'Samaya' as 'Samai' or 'Ghara' as 'Ghar' (use of halanta) and so on, which is unscientific (Subedi, 2016).

The linguists, authors, media personnel, publishers, academic institutions, etc. started campaigning against the order. Movements were started by Nepali Bhasha Sankaran Abhiyan, and the writer is an active participant in the same. A writ petition was filed in the Supreme Court.

Verdict from Supreme Court (2081 Ashar 9):

Finally, the court came to the rescue, and a bench of Chief Justice Hari Krishna Karki declared:

1. "No one has the right to change the spellings, structure, style and grammatical rules of the Nepali language; this applies to government officials, academic institutions, the Ministry of Education or the Curriculum Development Centre."

2. "The changes made in spelling, structure, style and grammatical rules have been ordered to be postponed immediately."

3. "The 2069 decision made by the Ministry of Education has been deemed entirely illegal, as no scientific linguistic criteria were met."

4. "A language is ultimately dictated by the usage of the linguistic community, and a bureaucrat has no right to interfere in its course of development without having any academic credentials for doing so."

This verdict was considered a landmark ruling on the legal aspect of the Nepali language, ensuring its orthography only gets reformed on classical or scientific grounds and not on political or administrative grounds.

5.7 Constitutional recognition and the linguistic movement for Nepali in India

Outside Nepal, India has the largest community speaking Nepali as their first language – estimated at 2 million people (Rai, 2019).

Historical Movement:

After India got its independence in 1947, different states came out with their official state language. Despite the majority of its speakers residing in the Nepali-dominated regions of Darjeeling, government work continued in Bengali. A language movement started in the 1960s, demanding "Nepali be listed in the Eighth Schedule". Numerous protests were led by the All India Nepali Language Committee, the Nepali Sahitya Parishad, and the Indian Gorkha Association, and many went to prison for their cause.

Achievement:

On 19th August 1991, the 71st Amendment Bill of the Indian Parliament officially listed Nepali, along with Konkani and Manipuri, in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The 19th of August is now celebrated as Nepali Language Day (Soga, 2017). Following this, Sikkim declared Nepali its first official state language. The state of West Bengal then declared Nepali as an official language for Darjeeling, followed by Nagaland, Assam, Meghalaya, and Manipur, which only partially recognised Nepali. However, this issue is far from over, as Nepali is still ignored at the school level and in many other information sources.

5.8 The role of Nepali as a contact language

Contact language (Nepali language): What does it mean?

The common language of communication among people speaking mutually different indigenous languages within a certain locality. The Nepali language has been serving this purpose in Nepal for centuries. The Tamangs, Magars, Gurungs, Rais, Limbus, Sherpas, Tharus and other hill groups in the hills use Nepali among themselves. Maithilis, Bhojpuris, Awadhis, Bajjikas and Urduis use Nepali as the lingua franca in schools and at the bazaars of Terai.

Nepali has been acting as a contact language in Sikkim and Darjeeling between the Rai, Limbu, Lepcha, Bhutia and the Indian Maithili speakers. The Nepali-speaking community has also established its language and literature in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, etc. And publish Nepali newspapers there periodically. Even though the number of speakers is comparatively less, its importance in establishing itself as a contact language in every sphere of human activities worldwide is not equal to any other language.

6. Conclusion

Through the history of the Nepali language, one fact emerges: it is never an artificially constructed project. It reached its permanent modern form from Khas Prakrit, the Dullu inscription, the living dialect of Sinja, the administration of the Gorkhalis, the poems of Bhanu Bhakta, Turnbull's grammar and the movement of Darjeeling. I have tried to prove that the Nepali language has been used in writing since the 11th century. The source of the Nepali language is Khas Prakrit, not Shauraseni or Hindi. It is the common language used in writing to communicate with each other in society, with so many kinds of races and

languages. Its writing is not controlled by legal acts and official bodies but through scientific practice and popular usage.

The Nepali language is recognised as the language in the constitution of India, and it should still be protected. Today, we have two big challenges regarding language. One is attempting to change language without proper knowledge by individuals and academic institutes; the second is administrative tyranny to minimise the human essence of language science. The latest verdict by the Nepal Supreme Court has given a big respite; however, the burden now lies on the shoulders of academicians, writers, journalists and the public. We must use and preserve our language as the best possible scientific way.

The suggestion is that the Nepali language should be experimental, and academic curriculum related to it should be more dynamic. As suggested by the Supreme Court, change in the language should occur through the linguistic community and pre-determination of use. Official orders do not work. The state should focus on 'promotion' and 'preservation' rather than 'control' and 'interference'. Finally, the Nepali language is our source of pride. Its existence was started in Dullu, and today we have reached Darjeeling, Sikkim, Dehradun, Bangkok, New York and Sydney, and we all have responsibility for it.

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[2]The Historical-Sociological Relationship between the Khas Language and the Magar Tribe: A Review of Identity Fluidity and Linguistic Transformation

Summary

This article provides an account of historical, linguistic and social interaction between the two dominant communities of the mid-hill region of Nepal: the Khas (Indo-Aryan) and the Magar (Tibeto-Burmese). More specifically, the contested statement that "the Khas language was originally the language of the Magars" has been examined from a multidisciplinary approach – linguistics, anthropology and sociology. The article delineates with examples the processes of fluidity of identity (Fredrik Barth), acculturation (M.N. Srinivas), and linguistic influence from the substrate through the Sinja Empire (11th-14th cent.) to the present day. There is presented ample evidence of shared surnames (Thapa, Rana and Budhathoki), intermarriage and the institution of Mundhum based on works of Dor Bahadur Bista, M.S. Thapa Magar, Balkrishna Pokharel and John Whelpton.

In conclusion, it has been shown that while, linguistically, the Khas language belongs to the Indo-Aryan family, socially its use and cultural incorporation have somehow been co-produced by the Magar society. It is argued that although the Khas language is not the native tongue of the Magars, it is an integrated part of Magar identity due to thousands of years of interaction. Such a perspective may lead towards decolonising the historiography of Nepal.

Keywords: Khas language, Magar ethnicity, fluidity of identity, acculturation, Mundhum, Sinja Empire, decolonisation, ethnography, substrate effect, common surname.

1. Introduction

For thousands of years the mid-hills of Nepal have been a site of interaction between various ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups. It has been the region where Khas and Magars have had the greatest interaction, and this social interaction has shaped the social fabric of Nepal to a considerable extent. Historically, the Khas are considered to be bearers of Indo-Aryan language and culture, whereas the Magars are considered to be proto-Aryan and of Tibeto-Burmese stock (Bista, 1991; Whelpton, 2005). It was not a society of total conformity or total conflict, but rather, a society where history itself was one of flux and hybridity.

Against this social context, a recent pronouncement of "Khas was originally the language of the Magars" has become a topic of discussion within Nepalese academia. This recent scholarship of Subba (2026) gave this discourse a historical and sociological dimension. But is it purely a linguistic phenomenon or simply a natural discourse that arises in the context of identity politics and colonial historiography?

Apart from Subba (2026), historical documentary evidence is provided below:

A. Historical documentary evidence: military-administrative documents of the Khas Kingdom:

Proof of shared warrior titles (Thapa, Rana, Budha, Khadga): It is known that warrior titles such as 'Thapa', 'Khadga', and 'Rana' can be seen on the statue of a hero of old in the Khas Kingdom in western Nepal. The titles are clearly recorded in Paikela's warrior titles. The titles 'Thapa', 'Khadga', and 'Rana' are prevalent in both Khas (Kshetri) and Magars (Adhikary, 2012, p. 89).

In today's world, too, there exist close relations between native Magar speakers and Khas-Nepali. The evidence for this is that only 2.98 per cent of Magar people speak the language (Nepal Census, 2011), while all of the remaining Magars speak the Khas-Nepali language either as a mother tongue or as a second language (Magar Association UK, n.d.).

B. Earliest academic accounts (British source, 19th century):

George Bogle (1879), in his book, *The Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet*, has recorded that Khas were present in Chaubisya, and these, alongside Gurungs and Magars, represented the warrior caste of Nepal. So intertwined were the relationships of Khas, Magars and Gurungs that the warrior caste came to be commonly associated with the term "Gorkhas" (Bogle, 1879).

The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society essay of 1869 entitled 'Art. IV.-As referred to in 'Observations on the Magar Language of Nepal', 'The language of the Magars is quite far from the Tibetan tongue, and it is cited by the Magars themselves in favour of their Rajput descent.' It therefore seems to be clear that the Magars were affected by Khas linguistic-cultural domination, and the former cited the latter to affirm their own Rajput status (Hodgson, 1869, p. 186).

C. Shared conclusions of recent Nepali academics

Dor Bahadur Bista has clearly mentioned, "The Khas Aryans intermarried with the local tribes (Magar, Gurung, and Kirant) and created a new racial identity." Therefore, a lot of the Khas or "Chhetri" identity comes from Magars in terms of blood, etc. (View, 1991, p. 46).

Linguistically, Balkrishna Pokharel has proved the strong Tibeto-Burmese (Magar) substrate in the Khas language: although Khas is an Indo-Aryan language with its grammar and basic lexicon, most of its everyday vocabulary (like Goth, Chiya, Gharihun, etc.) belongs to the Magar language (Pokharel, 1998, p. 67).

Madhav Pokharel has also pointed out that the communities that call Nepali a 'special language' include Magars, Newars and some tribes (Madhav Pokharel, 2019).

D. Socio-political aspect of the statement 'Thar' and 'language learning'

Thapa, Rana, Budha, Gharti, Roka, etc. Are they the ancestral titles of the Magars? Later, the Khas Empire adopted the same warrior titles as an administrative one and called the titles 'Khetri' titles (Adhikary, 2012). This counter-effect strengthens the conclusion that Magars have 'adopted' the Khas language and have used it (Thapa Magar, 1993).

This means the Magar communities, being of different language families, have utilised the Khas language for a long time as an instrument for military conquest, trade, administration and higher social status, and it has become their 'mother tongue' in socio-political terms.

Thus, the aforementioned statement about the Khas language being of the Magars has not only been said by Subba (2026) but also strongly stated by scholars such as Dor Bahadur Bista, Balkrishna Pokharel, John Whelpton, M.S. Thapa Magar, Madhav Pokharel, and Britishers in the 19th century (Bogle; Hodgson). To them, the Khas language is not of any particular community; it has become a property of all Khas-Magar people that shows their combined nature and culture; therefore, the Khas language is neither 'a fact of linguistic history' nor 'a matter of identity politics' but is both.

Firstly, it is a linguistic fact, as both of them have played an important role in the development of the language; secondly, it is a socio-political affair and identity-orientated discourse that reflects the process of assimilation and acculturation.

The present paper will attempt to clarify the relationship between the Khas language (an archaic version of the modern Nepali language) and the Magars caste in the mid-hills of Nepal, based on three theoretical principles:

(1) linguistic substratum theory (Meillet), which implies the influence of the inferior language on the sound structure, vocabulary, phrases and sentences of the superior language as contact occurs between them. It is used for Pokharel's analysis (1998, p. 67);

(2) Sanskritisation (M. N. Srinivas), an idea that the lower caste attempts to imitate the behaviour of upper castes in terms of adopting their religion, customs and languages to achieve status; and

(3) identity fluidity (Friedrich Barth), which signifies that the group boundaries are not static but fluctuate with sociocultural context and situation.

This paper argues that despite not being the first ones (source) to develop the Khas language, Magars have been the key partners in spreading the Khas language and making it an instrument of higher social status, army, trade and administrative functions, as it has become their part of identity due to extensive interaction over time (Thapa Magar, 1993; Whelpton, 2005, p. 42).

It relies heavily on studies carried out by such scholars as Dor Bahadur Bista, M.S. Thapa Magar, Balkrishna Pokharel, Iman Singh Kemjong and John Whelpton. In addition, historical documents about the Twelve Magarats and Eighteen Magarats of Western Nepal and ethnographic records of shared Magar clan surnames, as well as oral literature of Magar mundhum, along with analysis of their respective languages, would be provided as proof. Therefore, the subsequent paragraphs attempt to explain the relationship between the Khas language and the Magars caste from a decolonial approach, giving a balanced overview.

2. Rationale for the study

The following are the areas of analysis:

1. Revitalising the history narrative. For a long time, the Khas-Parvatiya-Bahun-Khetri dominated writing in the Nepali history of hills, and therefore other tribes became peripheral (Whelpton, 2005). Therefore, highlighting the Magar contribution to Khas Bhasa becomes a necessary process of decolonisation.

2. Responding to contemporary identity politics: ethnic movements have been raising narratives on 'atrocities' and 'kidnappings'. It becomes a need to respond to extremism using historical data (marriage relations between two communities, common surnames, etc.) in a scholarly manner.

3. Understanding processes of language shift/adoption and death (language transformation process). The Nepali context is changing very fast, and the comparison of Khas-Magar language relations becomes a unique laboratory where we can clearly analyse 'how an Indo-European language absorbed a Tibeto-Burman community' (Pokharel, 1998, 67).

3 Theoretical Foundations

Three major theoretical frameworks form the foundation of this analysis:

3.1 Ethnic boundaries and fluidity of identity (Fredrik Barth, 1969)

As per Fredrik Barth, groups of people can be defined not by shared substance of culture but by social boundaries that separate one group from another. The boundary between the Khas and Magar has been very fluid through history. The same person could shift from 'Khas' to 'Magar' or vice versa as per his adoption of certain linguistic, dressing or ritual habits. This has led to many 'Chhetris' today claiming Magar ancestry.

3.2 Sanskritisation (M. N. Srinivas, 1952)

M. N. Srinivas described a process of social mobility called 'Sanskritisation', where lower castes adopt the ways of living of the higher castes to become socially higher. In the western region of Nepal, warriors and rulers who came from Magar origins (e.g., Sen kings of Palpa) adopted parts or the whole of the Khas culture – Khas Bhasha, Janai, and narratives on Vedic origins. This was not 'Hinduisation' but an adoption of linguistic styles that came from the Khas-Aryan complex.

3.3 Substratum linguistic influence (Substratum Theory – Antoine Meillet)

It is believed that when two languages are brought together, the language spoken by the lower strata (substratum language) has influence over the higher strata (superstratum language) on matters of sounds, meaning and syntax. Khas Bhasha has a language that bears influences from the Aryan family (Doteli, Kumaoni and Garhwali) and has the layer of influence of Tibeto-Burman languages like Magar, Gurung and Kirant. This can be seen as a weakness and a strength in Dr. Subba's assertion, discussed below in point 5.

4 Research methodology

This is explanatory qualitative library-based (desk-based) research which follows a certain paradigm. This study takes an objective approach to investigate historical and social facts and study them within their context, meaning, and dynamics of identity as opposed to numerical measurements and laboratory experiments (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This qualitative approach is chosen because the Khas-Magar relationship in the mid-hills of Nepal has a multifaceted and multi-layered approach (Thapa Magar, 1993; Whelpton, 2005).

4.1 Classification of data sources

The research has systematically used two types of sources:

Primary Sources:

Dr. Subba's manuscript (Subba, 2026) - Central argument of this essay: "Khas Bhasha was the language of the Magars." The document argues about the validity of this hypothesis.

Historical inscriptions and heroic monuments of western Nepal (e.g., Jumla inscription of king Nagaraj of Sinja, 1224 A.D.) - Mention military terms like 'Thapa', 'Gharti', and 'Budhathoki' as military ranks in both the communities (Adhikary, 2012, p. 91).

Oral tales of Magar Mundhum - Kemjong (2003) and Thapa Magar (1993) documented oral traditions of the Magar people on Khas kings, Khas Bhasha, and Khas-Magar relations on marriage ties.

Secondary Sources:

Sources were selected on grounds of credibility (peer-reviewed publications, reputable publishing houses) and relevance to the topic:

Bista, D. B. (1991). Fatalism and Development – Analysis on the phenomenon of hybridisation between Khas and Magars and social change.

Whelpton, J. (2005). A History of Nepal - Analysis on the history and socio-political changes in the hilly region since the empire of Sinja.

Thapa Magar, M. S. (1993). Prachin Magar Ra Mangarat – The only detailed ethnographic history of the Magar people, written by an author of the Magar community.

Pokharel, B. K. (1998). Five Hundred Years – Analysis of the historical grammar of the Nepali language and evidence of substratum influence.

Pokharel, B. K. (1998). History of the Khas Tribe - Analysing the anthropological origin and evolution of the Khas.

Chemjong, I. S. (2003). History and culture of Kirat people - Comparative analysis of Khas and Magar language and culture.

Contemporary research: Magar Association UK statistics, Hodgson's (1869) linguistic report, Bogle's (1879) travel journal.

4.2 Data collection method

Data has been collected through library and archive reviews. Specifically:

The review of the research on inscriptions was based on Adhikary's (2012) re-analysis of inscription details written in local history books.

Cultural anthropological field research data from Pyuthan, Rolpa, Salyan, and Dang (Bahra Magarat-Athar Magarat area), written by field researchers (e.g., Pitz and Hamilton), have been cited in the analysis as secondary data.

4.3 Data analysis process

Content analysis and historical comparative analysis were conducted in combination based on Krippendorff (2018).

Step 1: Coding

Codes identified before commencing work. The primary codes are 'identity', 'language', 'surname', 'marriage relation' and 'power'. Common surnames like 'Thapa', 'Rana', 'Budhathoki', 'Gharti' and 'Roka' are identified and are termed as evidence for 'identity fluidity'.

Step 2: Thematic Analysis

Three major themes have emerged. These include:

Mixing between Khas and Magar communities (Bista, 1991; Whelpton, 2005)

Substratum influence on Khas Bhasha by Magar language (Pokharel, 1998)

Fluid identity: adoption of Khas language and culture to rise higher up in social hierarchy (Srinivas, 1952; Barth, 1969)

Step 3: Triangulation

The same result is obtained through triangulation using a minimum of 3 data sources. For example, 'The role of Magar soldiers in dissemination of Khas Bhasha' is proved after it being corroborated by the data from (i) inscriptions, (ii) History of Thapa Magar, and (iii) Whelpton's writings (Denzin, 2017).

4.4 Ethics and Boundaries

The researcher ensures proper citing of all sources. The race and language of none have been put down, nor has Dr. Subba's argument been diluted. Respect has been given to the Magar representation of their identity (Thapa Magar, 1993).

Limitations:

It was not possible to collect oral data, as the research was based solely on library work without field visits.

Only the western Nepal region has been emphasised due to the focus of research, and, therefore, central and eastern Nepal are under-represented.

4.5 Justification

- Qualitative library-based methodology has been chosen for the following reasons:
 - The nature of the study itself is historic and linguistic in character, where laboratory research has no scope.
 - Analysis using desk-based research is a method that helps identify consensus/conflict among several researchers in academic texts.
 - Pandemic and time and resource limitations required depth of study on the subject matter without field trips (Cheater, 2019).
- All the arguments and analyses have been justified by providing various sources.

5. Presentation and discussion

Here, we'll review it with evidence, counter-evidence and explanation.

5.1 Linguistic duality: What does 'Khas Bhasha was the language of the Magars' imply?

The Khas and the Magar languages are not structurally similar. The hypothesis presented by Nawa Raj Subba says the contrary to this by pointing out a socio-linguistic and historical fact that, in terms of practice and historically, the "language of mouth" for a huge part of Magar (the real language in practice) was Khas. Hence, in their psychological framework, Khas became "their language" (Subba, 2026). This statement is in no sense a refutation of classification. Instead, it refutes the concept of "linguistic ownership". In fact, today, a majority of the Magars all over the world speak Khas-Nepali as an L1 or L2 (Nepal Census 2011). It is not an imposition on Magars but rather a natural consequence of daily interaction and marriage within the framework of the Khas empire, be it trade, military, or administration (Whelpton, 2005; Vista, 1991).

As the linguist Subba states, we have to differentiate linguistic genealogy (family of a language) and sociolinguistics (usage of language). Even if Khas (Indo-Aryan) and Magar (Tibeto-Burmese) are structurally distinct, at the functional level – more so in western Nepal (Barha Magarat) – the Khas language became not only a lingua franca but also, in fact, their language (Thapa Magar, 1993, p. 134). Hence, Dr. Subba's claim that "Khas Bhasha was the language of the Magars" is sociologically and historically correct, rather than linguistically.

Let us look at the language:

-Difference of families: Khas (Nepali) falls under the present Indo-Aryan family, whereas Magar falls under the Tibeto-Burmese family. Structures of verbs (SOV vs compound verbs), palatal consonants and the distinction between short and long vowels differ significantly (Pokharel, 1998, pp. 112-115).

-Evidence from substrate: However, Dr. Subba's argument bears weight from the large numbers of Tibeto-Burmese loanwords in the Khasa language. For example:

'Chia' – In Khas, this is pronounced 'Chia' (in other Aryan languages it is 'chai', while in eastern hill dialects of Magar it is 'Chiya').

'Goth' is probably borrowed from the Magar word 'goth'.

Even common daily vocabulary like 'lung' (lugpa in Tibetan), 'household' and 'bag' have Tibeto-Burmese roots (Chemjong, 2003, p. 89).

But is it logical to say a language is "Magar" for having borrowed some thousand words from the Magar language? No, the core of the Khas language (like words meaning 'paani', 'aago', 'haat', 'din', 'raat', 'soch', etc.) is from the Indo-European language family. Hence, Dr. Subba's claim that "language is originally Magar" is only correct in a figurative and sociological aspect and not from a pure linguistic perspective.

5.2 Historical Fusion: Marriage, Blood and Identity Changing Surnames

It is in his concept of historical intermingling of the two peoples that the linguist Subba's assertion carries the greatest weight. When the Khas Aryans moved into Nepal from the west, they lacked a proper supply of women. Dor Bahadur Bista has pointed out vividly, "Khas Aryans intermarried with these indigenous tribes (Magars, Gurung, and Kirant) and had a varna-sankar (hybrid) identity" (Vista, 1991, p. 46). The very commonness of certain surnames, such as Thapa, Rana, Budhathoki, Gharti, Roka, and Lamichhane, found in both 'Chhetri' and 'Magar' castes, give concrete evidence.

M.S. Thapa Magar says that 'Thapa' was the chief warrior title in the Magar caste initially, which was later appropriated by the Khas Empire as a military title, subsequently evolving into a title-surname, which eventually came to be used by many Magars (along with 'Chhetri') for convenience (Thapa Magar, 1993, pp. 127-130). So to rephrase, instead of stating that "Khas Bhasha was the language of Magars", the right formulation should be that "at least a third of the blood present in the present-day Khas (Chhetri) is of Magar lineage, and a great majority of the Magar blood who adopted the title/surname Khas (Chhetri) have given up their native language in favour of the Khas language."

5.3 Role of the Sinja Empire and Magarat

The Sinja empire (11th-14th century AD) in the Karnali zone is recognised as the first Khas kingdom. Dr. Subba's research shows that a bulk of soldiers of the Sinja state came from the chieftainries of Bara Magarat and Athaara Magarat. The language of administration of the Sinja Empire was Khas (written in Trivikram Nagari script). There is a little-known theory that the oral habits of Magar soldiers were influential in the development of the military etiquette from 'tuhun' (pronounced 'timi') to 'tapai' (Whelpton, 2005, pp. 34-36).

In fact, after the decline of the Sinja Empire, it was the Magar states that kept the tradition of Khas-Nepali alive. The Sen king of Palpa was a Magar or belonged to a Khas-Magar community; his inscriptions and eulogies were both in Sanskrit and Khas-Nepali. But if the Khas language was alien to the Magars, why should they take it as their state language? Because of their own need, it became their mother tongue by first becoming the language of common discourse, trade and warfare.

5.4 Khas language in the Mundhum saga

The Mundhum is the original spiritual and religious text of the Magar people (oral traditions). Some of the fragments compiled by Iman Singh Chemjong (2003) of the Kirat Mundhum and parts of the Magar Mundhum have 'Khas Raja', 'Khas Parbat' and 'Khas Bhashaka Shabda' (pp. 145-147). What is interesting to note is that the Khas language is referred to as 'their own outside language' in the Magar Mundhum. Hence, there was no feeling of hostility or superiority between the two tribes, but instead, it showed the cultural interpenetration and amalgamation. Dr. Subba again makes an interesting assertion here: some of the sages of the Mundhum (Bhusal, Bhojpure) have prayed to God in both Magar and Khas languages. It denotes religious bilingualism, which clearly shows the integration of the Khas language as the sacred language of Magars.

5.5 Critical Review

A review needs to be critical.

A. Lack of documented evidence: There is absolutely no documented evidence in the form of inscriptions, copper plates, etc., prior to the 13th century stating that Khas was originally a Magar language. So far, no Khas inscription before the 13th century of the Karnali province includes the word "Magar" or the grammatical structures of the Magar language.

B. Error in chronological timeline: The development of the old Khas language (Nepali as Baise Khas and Khas Khas) has been identified to be as old as the 7th to 8th century in some parts of Nepal (Pokharel, 1998, p. 23). We still do not know if Magars had attained their current unified identity at that stage or not.

C. A linguist's attempt to categorise a language through the prism of ownership: A language is public property. To say that the language was only that of the Magars means denying the contribution of other hill people to its formation, and saying that it was the only Khas language means denying the contribution of Magars to its refinement. It's their common property jointly created by Khas Aryans and various hill tribes (Magars, Kirats, Gurungs, Tamangs). The Khas language is linguistically Indo-Aryan, but its adoption by Magars and other tribes makes it a significant lingua franca in the hill civilisation of Nepal; the linguistic relationship is so intimate that its identity turned into that of the speakers themselves.

6. Synthesis and Conclusion

Ever since Dr. Subba highlighted the notion of "The Historical Relationship between Khas and Magar", it has opened up academic discussions in Nepal to entirely new dimensions. Nonetheless, as far as cultural and social relations are concerned, this language could not have been a fully complete language without the Magars; they filled it up, injected their souls, and, over generations, it became their mindset.

1. Linguistically: It is incorrect to term the Khas language as 'originally the language of the Magars'. This is because the basis (grammar, original lexicon) of the Khas language comes from an Indo-European origin. However, from the point of view of the cultural and social relations, this language would have been incomplete without the Magars; they enriched it, poured their souls into it, and through generations it became 'their' mindset.

2. Historically, the Khas-Magar relationship was not one of 'vanquisher-vanquished', but it was a relationship of marrying each other and developing culture. The Sinja Empire, the Twelve-Eighteen Magarats, and the Sen Kingdoms of Palpa are pieces of evidence for this symbiotic relationship. Considering the common surnames (Thapa, Rana, Budhathoki, and Gharti) and common vocabulary,

there is adequate evidence to support Dr. Subba's theory that the Khas language and the Magars have become one in terms of each other's identity.

3. Decolonisation: Dr. Subba's article takes steps towards eradicating the one-sided, Aryan-orientated mainstream narrative. He poses the question, 'Why has the contribution of the tribal people to the development of the Khas language and state formation never been identified?' 'An ethical answer should be empathetic in nature.

Lastly, this review is also an added value regarding linguistic exactness. The relationship between the Khas language and Magar cannot be perceived as the confluence of two parallel rivers but instead two different streams from the same land – one nurturing the other, mingling together and then separating again, yet chemically linked. The name of that chemical mixture is 'Nepali Identity'.

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[3]The Influence of Tibeto-Burmese on the Nepali Language: A Structural and Decolonial Discourse

Abstract

This article will explore the structural and substantial impact of Tibeto-Burman languages on the emergence and form of the Nepali language in depth. Linguistic understandings of the Nepali language, to this point, have traditionally explained the Nepali language as a 'pure' member of the Indo-Aryan language family that had originated from Sanskrit.

In the course of this article, these 'mono-Aryan' understandings will be refuted, and the 'substratum' role of Tibeto-Burmese languages such as Magar, Kirat, Newar, Tamang, etc. will be highlighted. The structure of the Nepali language in terms of its grammatical features, phonology and semantic domains will be explored. Based on the qualitative study method and comparative linguistic analysis, this article asserts that 'ergativity', the specific nature of verbal constructions, the lexical richness of onomatopoeia words, the reduction of gender discrimination, etc., of the Nepali language are the effects of the Tibeto-Burmese languages.

From a decolonial perspective, this paper shall be used to examine how the impacts of tribal languages have been suppressed through centralised statehood and history writing. In conclusion, it will be argued that the Nepali language is not the sole creation of an ethnic group but a joint 'hybrid' and wonderful invention by all ethnic groups of Nepal, and this will also endeavour to pave the way for a new way of academic work of decolonising history and linguistic justice.

Keywords: decolonisation, Tibeto-Burmese influence, structural analysis, linguistic hybridisation, affiliation theory, identity politics

1. Introduction

Nepal is a country that is wedged between two large countries. It so happens that it is also a country where the two large language families meet – the Indo-Aryan language family and the Tibeto-Burman language family. As the 'Census of Nepal 2078' and the reports of the Language Commission clearly reflect, Nepal has as many as 124 languages. Hence, Nepal is a "linguistic laboratory" (Yadava, 2003). While, for centuries, the Nepali language – evolved from Khas-Kura and the state-chosen lingua franca – enjoyed dominance, it concealed a kind of "linguistic colonialism" under its dominance in the sense that the Nepali language was considered the sole inheritor of Sanskrit, completely negating other indigenous elements of language contained within it (Subba, 2026).

When tracing the origins of the Nepali language, conventional linguists proposed a linear progression: "Sanskrit-Prakrit-Corruption-Nepali". this interpretation accepted the influence of Sanskrit on the lexicon of the Nepali language while wholly ignoring the influence of the older Tibeto-Burmese languages on the grammar of the Nepali language (Turin, 2007). According to the argument put forth by Amrit Yonjan-Tamang (2026), the identity of any given language is not to be seen merely through the lexeme component; the true identity of the language lies on the phonological and grammatical level. A prime example of this is the existence of 'ergativity', or the particular syntax of the verbal suffix 'le' found

in the Nepali language, which has no parallel within the contemporary Indic sister languages like Hindi, Bengali or Marathi (Noonan, 2003).

By establishing a "linguistic area" in South Asia, Masica (1976) argues that languages from different language families which are geographically close to each other exhibit "linguistic convergence" as a consequence of prolonged coexistence. The extent of linguistic convergence within the Nepali language is so profound that, although it is firmly founded on the principles of the Indo-Aryan language family, it also has a Tibeto-Burmese "soul" or "grammatical bone". For instance, in imitation words and verbs within the Nepali language, the influence of Tibeto-Burmese languages is evident in their specific grammatical structures (Pokharel, 1999).

Hence, the "purification" of the Nepali language cannot be seen as mere reinsertion of Sanskrit words alone; from a post-colonialist approach, the Nepali language needs to be reimagined in relation to its multilinguality and, especially, the grammatical influence exerted upon it by the Tibeto-Burman language family. This is not merely a debate over language; it also forms the backbone of the multilingual and plural nation that is enshrined within the Constitution of Nepal. Unless the endogenous components, residing in the "bones" of the Nepali language, are acknowledged, our linguistic future cannot be free of its monolithic and colonial disposition.

2. Rationale for the study

Nepali language historiography has a long, 'Sanskrit-centric' colonial view, which considered the primal, tribal roots of the Nepali language as its subsidiaries or appendages. In such a perspective, this study gains its relevance from the following points of view.

First, it linguistically re-establishes the Tibeto-Burmese contributions on which the structural frame of the Nepali language rests. Second, the present 'decolonisation of history'. It is from such a perspective that this study seeks to investigate the 'tribal truth' and the Mundhumi body of knowledge subjugated by centralised commentaries in terms of language. Third, it awakens the sense of the Nepali language as the common, mixed possession of all Nepalis, instead of considering it as something of conflict between 'Khas' and 'Janajati'.

Fourth, in the domain of linguistic studies, the emergence of a new 'linguistic field' through Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burmese convergence and thus how the concept of Nepali identity was constituted, this article opens new insights into the question with new data. Fifth, it also ratifies the existence of marginal languages and the resulting enrichment of the national language through embracing the spirit of Nepal's multilingualism policy and the system guaranteed in the constitution.

Thus, this study is not simply an analysis of language but is a significant academic effort towards the construction and intellectual decolonisation of Nepali identity in a broad sense.

3. Theoretical framework

The present research will analyse the structural influences on the Nepali language by Tibeto-Burmese not merely as linguistic exchange but as a re-enactment of relationships of historical power and identity. For that, the following theoretical frameworks will be employed:

Language Contact and Structural Influence Theory:

This theory, propounded by Thomson and Kaufman (1988), states that the influence from a 'substratum' language to a 'superstratum' language takes place for prolonged contact between two structurally diverse language families. Here, though Nepali belongs to the Indo-Aryan family, some elements of the Nepali language, such as 'imitational words', 'special verbs' and 'lack of gender', were transmitted through this theory, which is regarded as being influenced by the Tibeto-Burmese 'substratum'. The role of influence will be discussed.

Decolonial Thinking:

Decolonial thought, formulated by Walter Mignolo and Anil Quijano, forms the basis of this research. Challenging the colonial-centred narrative which regards the Nepali language only as a polished form of the Sanskrit language (Sanskrit centrality), the article tries to explore the role of indigenous languages of Tibeto-Burmese groups of language (Magar, Kirat, Tamang, etc.) in forging the structural basis of the Nepali language from a 'decolonial perspective'.

Anthropology and Mundhumian Philosophy:

Within the ambit of 'decolonisation of history', as emphasised by this writer, the study employs an anthropological perspective which looks upon language as not merely a bunch of words but as an entity carrying oral history and native knowledge systems like 'mundhum'. While investigating the original nature of the Nepali language, the tribal origin will be the central focus.

Fluid Identity and Linguistic Hybridisation:

The concept of ethnic boundaries by Friedrich Barth and Homi Bhabha's 'hybridity' theory helps to establish the fluidity in the relationship between the Khas community and the Tibeto-Burmese communities. Nepali as a 'hybrid' language: how it has developed as a collective identity and how the structure of marginalised language is embedded within it will be discussed in the context of this concept.

4. Research Methodology

Mainly a qualitative research method will be adopted in this research. This research will be based on it; it will present the interrelation of historical facts, language structure, and cultural discourse. The major points of the research methodology will be the following:

Historical-Interpretive Method:

The linguistic evolution of the period from the Sinja Empire to present-day Nepal will be represented in this study by using historical documents and analysing the social and political interplay between the Khas and Tibeto-Burmese-speaking languages to show the modification in language structures.

Comparative Linguistic Analysis:

The analysis of some particular structural facts (e.g., ergativity, nominative and honourifics) of Nepali grammar will be presented by comparing them with the language structures of Tibeto-Burmese languages. The primary and secondary sources will be based on the structural models of the Limbu, Magar and Newari languages.

Critical Discourse Analysis - CDA:

With the framework of the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) presented by Norman Fairclough, this research will investigate how the influence of Tibeto-Burmese has been denied by the orthodox

historiography of Nepal and expose 'what was hidden' instead of 'what was said' based on academic sources.

Library work and resource collection (desk research):

Primary sources will be inscriptions, manuscripts and oral traditions, and secondary sources will be critical reinterpretations of academic works of the scholars such as Balkrishna Pokharel, Dor Bahadur Bista and Yogendra Prasad Yadav.

Decolonising Research Paradigm:

Following 'decolonising methodology' presented by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, the personal background and native wisdom of the researcher will also be considered as a valuable tool for the analysis. The focus will be on the research subjects of the local realities instead of solely on the westernised and central norms.

5. Evidence of structural effects

5.1 Ergativity and the use of the suffix 'le': A structural analysis

The languages in the world can be categorised into two classes based on the relationship between the subject and action:

a. Passive/active: The 'doer' (whether passive or active) is always the same in this. This is the case with Sanskrit, English and Hindi (in the present tense).

b. In the ergative-absolutive category, the 'subject of the intransitive verb' and the 'action of the transitive verb' stay the same, but the 'subject of the transitive verb' (agent) is marked with a special inflection. This is a simple characteristic of the Tibeto-Burmese languages.

5.2 'Split' ergativity in Nepali

The use of the suffix 'le' is not always obligatory in Nepali, as it is based on the 'aspect' of the verb. Thus, it is referred to as 'split ergativity' (Butt 2001).

Rewrite sentences, depending on the tense and aspect. Example 1: Rewrite according to the tense and aspect.

Simple Present (Intransitive): *Ma janchu*. (In this case, there is only 'Ma'.)

The present simple (transitive): *Ma Bhat Khanchu*. Note: In the phrase 'elle est', 'elle' is not required.

You have eaten something in the past (transitive): *Mai-le Bhat Khaye*. The form of the verb should be 'le' (required).

This marking of the subject in the 'past tense' or 'perfect tense' with 'le' is not an essential rule of Indian grammar. It is the product of a thousand years of contact with a group of Tibeto-Burmese languages spoken in the hilly and Himalayan regions of Nepal (Noonan, 2003).

6. Comparative example of the Tibeto-Burmese effect

In the Tibeto-Burmese languages of Nepal, a separate suffix is used to denote the agent, which can be compared to the Nepali 'le'. In the Tibeto-Burmese languages of Nepal, there is another suffix specifically used to indicate the agent (and can be compared with the Nepali 'le').

Table 1: Comparison of Tibeto-Burmese and Nepali Ergative Markers

Language	Intransitive subject (S)	Transitive subject (A)	Ergative markers
Nepal Bhasha (Newar)	<i>Ji Wana</i> (I went).	<i>Ji-Nam: Sa Naya</i> (I ate meat).	-Nam
Limbu	<i>Ani Pektumba</i> (We went)	<i>Ani-lle Sa ChaSamma</i> (We ate meat.)	-lle (
Nepali	<i>Ma Gaye</i> (I went).	<i>Mai-le Bhat Khaye</i> (I ate rice).	-le

According to Pokharel (1999), the use of 'le' in Nepali appears to have increased since mediaeval times, when the Khas Empire expanded, and there was more intermingling with Tibeto-Burmese speakers. This confirms that, while Sanskrit has influenced Nepali's vocabulary, the Tibeto-Burmese languages dominate its 'syntactic' structure.

Relevance of Decolonial Theory:

When we refer to Nepali as just the 'daughter of Sanskrit', we deny its particular 'ergative' identity. According to Amrit Yonjan-Tamang (2026), at this level of syntactic organisation, Nepali serves as a "common linguistic bridge" between Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman civilisations. This approach identifies Nepali as a shared quality of multilingual Nepal, rather than the language of a specific ethnic group or tribe.

7. The impact on Phonology

The Nepali language is unique in addition to its vocabulary in terms of pronunciation and phonetic structures. The phonetic 'DNA' of Nepali phonology has been influenced by the cohabitation of Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burmese languages. It has resulted in significant changes.

Phonetically, the Nepali language seems to have retained its Indo-European heritage and has borrowed its pronunciation patterns from the native Tibeto-Burmese and Munda languages. It has some of the following major foundations:

a) The following codes all refer to vowel sound (retroflexion) and density.

Though the vowel sounds are 'Ta', 'Tha', 'Tha', and 'Dha' or 'ढ', the sounds 'ठ', 'ढ', and 'ढ' do not occur in European Indo-European languages such as English, German and French. Linguists believe the indigenous peoples of South Asian Indo-European countries contributed to the formation of these sounds in their languages. It is a trait of Sanskrit phonology that was impacted by indigenous languages. Sanskrit acquired it through the encounter of Munda and Tibeto-Burmese languages (Masica, 1991).

These sounds are used in Nepali for more than only the Sanskrit word 'tatsam'. The original Nepali terms 'tadbhava' and 'aangantuk' include a high concentration of the Murdhanya sound, distinguishing them from other Indo-Pali languages.

For example:

Nepali root verbs/words: 'ढल्किनु, ठाउनु, डाम, ढिस्को, टुप्पो, ठिक्क' (Talkinu, Tha'Taunu, Daam, Dhisko, Tuppo, Thikka).

The sound and usage of 'त, ठ, द, ध' in these terms convey the aroma of Nepali soil, which is compatible with the Tibeto-Burmese language environment (Pokharel, 1989).

b) Nasalisation and its impact on vowels and consonants.

Nasalisation of vowels (pronunciation through the nose) is common in Tibeto-Burmese languages. The Chandrabindu (ँ) is widely used in Nepali, and local languages have influenced the nasalisation of vowels. Contact with the Kiranti languages of eastern Nepal and the Tamang-Gurung languages of the central highlands has imparted a 'nativeness' to the pronunciation of Nepali vowels (Yadava 2003).

c) The duality of words and sounds (reduplication)

Phonetic repetition (reduplication) of words in Nepali – the propensity is really strong. Examples include 'Pani-Sani', 'Chiya-Siya', 'Jhilimili', and 'Sarsar'. This phonetic structure is more common in the Tibeto-Burmese and Munda language families than in Indian grammar (Turin, 2007). This distinguishes Nepali rhythm and music from other Indo-European languages.

Table 2: Comparison of phonetic features

Speciality	Indo-European (original form)	Tibeto-Burmese /Native	The situation of Nepali
Vowel sound	Low or absent	high density	Very high and original use
Sound duality	Grammatically subordinate	The mainstay of communication	An integral part of everyday speech
Accented rhythm	Tan(Stress) Prime	Tone (Tone/Pitch) or breath-dominated	Mixed rhythms(Hybrid Rhythm)

Despite being Indian, its pronunciation is nasalised. It differs from its Indo-Aryan sibling languages (for example, Hindi) in terms of nasalisation density. Linguists believe that Nepali's nasalisation is the result of 'linguistic convergence' with Tibeto-Burmese languages. (Pokharel, 1989) will result in linguistic convergence.

This can be understood through the following examples and facts:

Distinctive nasality (phonemic nasalisation):

In Nepali, when vowels are uttered through the nose (nasalised), the word's meaning changes. This 'meaning-distinguishing' quality is common in most Tibeto-Burmese languages.

Table 3: Meaning differences caused by nasalisation in Nepali

Words (verbal intonation)	Meaning	Word (nasal vowel)	Meaning
बाँस (Bāns)	Fragrance/Smell	बास (Bās)	Residence/place to live
हाँ (Hān)	Opening mouth	हा (Hā)	A feeling! (Exclamation)
जाँड (Jānd)	Zand (alcohol)	जाड (Jād)	Winter (cold)

The practice of nasalising vowels, which alters meaning, is prevalent in languages such as Tamang, Newari, Limbu, and Gurung. It also appears to have influenced the Nepali hill dialect.

8. Phonology from a decolonial perspective

If we pronounce the Nepali language through the lens of Sanskrit, its natural 'Nepaliness' is lost. The Tibeto-Burmese languages greatly influence both the 'softness' and 'roughness' of Nepali pronunciation. In this respect, Nepali phonology is a 'multilingual document'.

Here are some essential linguistic examples and academic arguments to help clarify this section:

8.1 Self-nasalisation

When coming from Sanskrit to Nepali, many words are found to have the 'moon dot' (ँ) added to them without any historical reason. This is called 'spontaneous nasalisation' in linguistics. It is difficult to explain this in terms of the rules of Indian grammar, but it is believed that this phonetic change occurred when people in the local Tibeto-Burmese linguistic environment pronounced it (Mazaudon, 1973).

Examples:

Sanskrit: Akshi (अक्षी) → Nepali: Aankha आँखा ('ँ' added here)

Sanskrit: Pakka पक्क → Nepali: पाक्नु → पाको/पाँको (Pako/Panko) (according to taste)

Sanskrit: Anra अंर → Nepali: आँप

8.2 Regional and decolonial context

The Eastern and Western dialects of Nepali have different levels of nasality. The eastern Nepali dialect's vowels sound slightly more nasal due to the influence of the Kiranti languages. The true essence of the Nepali language lies in this "native sound". It would be ignoring the historical and structural development of the Nepali language to try to confine it to the harsh pronunciation of Sanskrit.

8.3 Word duality and echo words (Reduplication and echo words)

In everyday Nepalese speech, there is a strong tendency to repeat words or add similar sounds. This is referred to as 'duplication' in linguistics. Although this element appears in many South Asian languages, its prevalence and diversity in Nepali are equivalent to the 'syntax' of the indigenous Tibeto-Burmese languages. (Syntactic) and 'semantic'. The effect is obvious (Abbi, 1992).

8.3.1 Perfect duality versus imperfect duality

In Nepali, repeating a word exactly denotes plurality, continuity, or intensity. This pattern is a key aspect of the Tibeto-Burmese language.

- To signify the plural, use 'big-big' (large ones) and 'small-little' (tiny ones).
- To emphasise continuity, use 'walking, walking' and 'eating, eating'.
- To show intensity, use 'red-red' and 'hot-hot'.

8.3.2. Echo Words

"Echo-word" refers to the process of adding a new meaningless yet pertinent word by altering the sound at the end of the original word. Such words, which imply "adi/adityaadi" (et cetera), are made in Nepali by appending the sounds "s" or "va". (And so on) explains what it means.

Table 4: Root words and echo words

Root word	Echo words	Meaning (Generalisation)	Effects/Nature
Bhat (rice)	Bhat-Sat (Rice+)	Rice and other vegetables	Inclusiveness
Pani (Water)	Pani-Sani (water+)	Water or other liquids	Speech rhythm
Chia (Tea)	Chia-Sia (Tea+)	Tea and snacks, etc.	Tibeto-Burmese 'parlour' style

8.3.3. Impersonal words (ideophones)

Nepali is very rich in imitative words (e.g., 'jhaljhal', 'tirmir', 'kalkal', 'tharthar'). In Indian grammar, such words are considered 'infinitives', but in Tibeto-Burmese languages, such words express the entire scene or experience phonetically. According to Mark Turin (2007), the number and style of use of such words in Nepali are very similar to those of Kiranti and Tamang-Gurung languages.

9. Relevance of the decolonial concept

Such "dualism" and "imitative" words are often viewed as "impure" or "inferior" in the interest of "purifying" the language. In actuality, nevertheless, the Nepali language has become more "Nepali" and "intimate" than other Indo-Nepalese languages because of this particular word, "dualism". This is how our multilingual cultures communicate with one another. It is derived from grammar.

Nepali is a "mixed" and "powerful" language due to features like the "le" suffix (ergativity), nasal vowels, and word duality. When examining the development of the Nepali language from a decolonial perspective, it becomes clear that it is not merely a Sanskrit adaptation but rather a shared language based on the "structural foundation" of Tibeto-Burmese and other native languages of Nepal.

9.1 Constitutional and decolonial discourse

The connection between the concept of 'constitutional essence' and the 'decolonial consciousness' is very strong in the language discourse in Nepal. Article 6 of the Constitution of Nepal 2072 laid the foundation for linguistic equality by stating that all languages spoken by people in Nepal are national languages, but in reality, there exists a "linguistic hierarchy". (Government of Nepal, 2072).

This is a frame that might account for the need and usefulness of decolonial discourse in the following ways:

9.2 Acculturation: An Internal Colonialism

From a sociological standpoint, the attempt to purify the Nepali language by adding challenging Sanskrit terms might be viewed as "internal colonialism". The Tibeto-Burmese and other indigenous speakers who helped create the language are marginalised as "unable to speak pure Nepali" as a result of this process, which also separates the Nepali language from the vernacular (Subba, 2026). The "structural gifts" of the Tamang, Newari, or Kiranti languages in Nepali are lost when grammar is limited to the "Paninian" framework of Sanskrit, claims Amrit Yonjan-Tamang (2026). We're refuting the gifts of structure.

9.3 Commentary on 'Daughter of Sanskrit' and the Decolonial Challenge

Referring to the Nepali language as the "daughter of Sanskrit" is a colonial rhetoric that devalues the language's "agency" or autonomy of existence. The Nepali language must be viewed as a "hybrid" or "common ground" in decolonial discourse. For instance, Nepali terms like "guthi", "kipat", "mandir", and "mundhum" are more than just words; they are representations of the various ethnic groups' knowledge systems. The Nepali language incorporates indigenous epistemology. The Nepali language is established as the shared history of all Nepalis, not simply of any particular group, provided we employ 'le' (ergativity) and acknowledge the suffix as a Tibeto-Burmese influence (Noonan, 2003).

9.4 Real linguistic democracy

Speaking various languages is only one aspect of linguistic democracy; another is acknowledging the "rights" and "part" of other languages within the framework of the state's official language.

Table 5: Colonial versus decolonial perspectives

Party	Colonial (Sanskritisation)	Decolonial (multilingual)
Source	Only Sanskrit and Indo-European	Indo-European + Tibeto-Burmese + Munda
grammar	The strict rules of Sanskrit	Convergence of local languages (convergence)
word choice	The primacy of the word Tatsam	Respect for the word Tadbhava and Raithane
Goal	Linguistic accuracy (purity)	Linguistic Inclusivity (Inclusivity)

10. Conclusion

The multilingual vision of Nepal's Constitution becomes meaningful only when the study of Nepali gives equal importance to both its Tibeto-Burmese "bones" and its Indo-Aryan "skin". The decolonisation of history and the decolonisation of language go hand in hand. To understand Nepali beyond a purely Sanskrit-centred lens is to truly respect all the national languages of Nepal.

Nepali is not a pure or isolated language. It's a fusion language and an inclusive one, which has many loanwords from Sanskrit; however, the grammatical aspects still heavily draw upon Tibeto-Burmese. However, these deeper ties of grammar showcase a more familial relationship between Nepali and the

other languages in Nepal. As one dives further into the grammar of Nepali, this common linguistic ancestor becomes evident, and embracing and appreciating this linguistic diversity is the way Nepali's future shall be safe and sound.

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[4] The Nepali language's vernacular form and its indigenous roots: An exploratory article

1. Introduction

When the highly aggressive and Sanskritised foreign words had made the Nepali language artificial and tough to use, the Linguistic Movement originated from Banaras in 2013, named the 'Jharrobadi Movement'. The movement was led by linguists like Mahananda Sapkota, Balkrishna Pokharel, and Taranath Sharma; it was not based on caste or religion. It was the movement for the preservation of originality, honour and the native soul of the Nepali language.

The main aim of Jharroism (Jharrobad) was to keep Nepali close to the language of ordinary people and free from unnecessary complexity. Nepali is not only an Indo-European language or the property of one community. It has also been shaped by Nepal's older indigenous communities, especially Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic groups. Many everyday Nepali words come from these indigenous roots. Words such as "झ्याल", "ढोका", and "चुलो" are not foreign; they are native words preserved for centuries by Kirat, Newar, Tamang, Magar, and other indigenous communities of Nepal. This article explores the linguistic roots and meanings of 101 indigenous and Jharra words.

2. Neighbourhood relations of languages and the narrow philosophy

Many people wrongly believe that all Nepali words come from Sanskrit. In reality, the Nepali language has grown through long contact with local Tibeto-Burman and southeastern indigenous languages. The Jharrobadi movement rejected Sanskrit words like "gavaksha" and preferred native words such as the Newari word "jhyal". It also chose "dhoka" instead of "kapat".

This linguistic movement was not only about language purity. The other dimension it portrayed was the historical tradition of agreement and collaboration between different linguistic groups of Nepal. For example, many common words associated with food, farming, relations and nature are derived from these local languages, and they carry the flavour of the land and its inhabitants.

3. 101 jargon words and their linguistic roots

The table below lists 101 slang words that have become embedded in the Nepali language, their meanings/synonyms, their original language families, and their authentic reference sources.

(For reference sources here: [1] Balkrishna Pokharel (2031), [2] Mahananda Sapkota (2020), and [3] Chudamani Bandhu (2071) are the main basis.)

Table 6: Jharro words, Sanskrit synonyms and source details

S.No.	Jharro Shabda	Sanskrit Paryaya	Srota Bhasa Pariwar / Mool	References
1	Jhyal	Gawaksha	Tibeto-Burmese (Newar: Jhya)	[1]
2	Dhoka	Kapat / Dwar	Tibeto-Burman (Newar: Dhwakha)	[1]
3	Gundri	Kat	Tibeto-Burman (Newar)	[2]
4	Khat	Paryanka Palang	Tibeto-Burmese (Newar: Kha)	[2]
5	Kausi	Attalika Bardali	Tibeto-Burman (Newar: Kausi)	[1]
6	Nanglo	Shurpa	Tibeto-Burman (Newar)	[3]
7	Kharpan	Bhara	Tibeto-Burman (Newar: Khampu)	[3]
8	Makal	Angardhani	Tibeto-Burmese (Newar: Makal)	[2]
9	Chuk	Amlabishes	Tibeto-Burman (Newar)	[1]
10	Jyapu	Krishak	Tibeto-Burman (Newar)	[1]
11	Chyau	Chhatrak	Tibeto-Burman (Magar/Kiranti Mool)	[1]
12	Kodo	Priyangu Madua	Tibeto-Burman root	[1]
13	Phapar	Kultha	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
14	Pindalu	Aaluk	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
15	Tama	Banshankur	Tibeto-Burman (Newar/Tamang)	[1]
16	Sinki	Moolak-Bikar	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
17	Gumba	Bihar	Tibeto-Burman (Tibetan)	[3]
18	Lama	Bauddha Guru	Tibeto-Burman (Tibetan)	[3]
19	Solti	Sala / Mitra	Tibeto-Burman (Tibetan)	[1]
20	Soltini	Sali / Sakhi	Tibeto-Burman (Tibetan)	[1]

S.No.	Jharro Shabda	Sanskrit Paryaya	Srota Bhasa Pariwar / Mool	References
21	Tongba	<u>Madyabishes</u>	Tibeto-Burman (Limbu)	[3]
22	Sukuti	Shushkamansa	Tibeto-Burmese (Newar/Magar)	[2]
23	Masyaura	Pindak	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
24	Sel	Poop	Tibeto-Burman root	[1]
25	Doko	Banshapatra	Tibeto-Burman (Kiranti)	[1]
26	Thunse	Laghubanshapatra	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
27	Perungo	Panjar	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
28	Khunda	Astrabishes	Tibeto-Burman root	[1]
29	Pangra	Chakra	Tibeto-Burman root	[1]
30	Kaptero	Banshakhand	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
31	Bhyaguto	Mandook	Tibeto-Burman (Newar: Byancha)	[1]
32	Chamero	Charmachatak	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
33	Timur	Teekshnaphal	Tibeto-Burman / Raithane	[1]
34	Jimbu	Shakabishes	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
35	Kholo	Nadi	Tibeto-Burman root	[1]
36	Taharo	Kuti	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
37	Matan	Baithak Kaksh	Tibeto-Burman root	[1]
38	Kuruwa	Rakshak	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
39	Khutruke	Dhanpatra	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
40	Gyalbo	Raja	Tibeto-Burman (Sherpa)	[3]

S.No.	Jharro Shabda	Sanskrit Paryaya	Srota Bhasa Pariwar / Mool	References
41	Chhewang	Aayubridhi	Tibeto-Burman (Tibbati)	[3]
42	Thote	<u>Utsavabishes</u>	Tibeto-Burman (Gurung)	[3]
43	Sakela	Chandi Naach	Tibeto-Burman (Rai)	[3]
44	Chasok	Nawanna Pooja	Tibeto-Burman (Limbu)	[3]
45	Lhosar	Nababarsha	Tibeto-Burman (Gurung/Tamang/Sherpa)	[3]
46	Mhapuja	Aatmapuja	Tibeto-Burman (Newar)	[1]
47	Dhimal	Jatibishes	Tibeto-Burman root	[3]
48	Gongbu	Granthi	Tibeto-Burman (Newar)	[1]
49	Gajji	Bastrakhanda	Tibeto-Burman root	[2]
50	Dole	Shibikawahak	Tibeto-Burman root	[1]
51	Kera	Kadli	Aagneya (Munda Pariwar)	[1]
52	Katar	Panas	Aagneya (Munda Pariwar)	[1]
53	Paan	Tambool	Aagneya Pariwar	[2]
54	Supari	Poog	Aagneya Pariwar	[2]
55	Gainda	Khadgi	Aagneya Pariwar	[1]
56	Chamal	Tandul	Aagneya (Munda Pariwar)	[1]
57	Maijaro	Antya / Samapan	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
58	Sisnu	Brischikshak	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
59	Nihuro	<u>Pratanbishes</u>	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
60	Tarul	Kanda	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]

S.No.	Jharro Shabda	Sanskrit Paryaya	Srota Bhasa Pariwar / Mool	References
61	Gittha	Kandabishes	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
62	Bhyakur	Bheshajkanda	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
63	Jhismise	Ushakaal	Deshaj (Dhwanatmak)	[2]
64	Jhisrikka	Prabhat	Deshaj (Dhwanatmak)	[2]
65	Bhyainbhyain	Pralap	Deshaj (Dhwanatmak)	[1]
66	Katus	<u>Phalbishes</u>	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
67	Chilaune	Brikshabishes	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
68	Uttis	Kasthabishes	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
69	Khote	Sarejyukta	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
70	Gaegujreko	Patit	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
71	Tyamke	Shikhar / Baja	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
72	Jhyaure	Lokchhanda	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
73	Tapari	Patrapatra	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
74	Duna	Kshudrapatrapatra	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
75	Bancharo	Kuthar	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
76	Hansiya	Datra	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
77	Kuto	Khanitra	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
78	Kodalo	Khanitrabishes	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
79	Miyo	Medhi	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
80	Dain	Mardan	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]

S.No.	Jharro Shabda	Sanskrit Paryaya	Srota Bhasa Pariwar / Mool	References
81	Gunyu	Sadi	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
82	Cholo	Kanchuki	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
83	Kachhad	Katiwastra	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
84	Bhoto	Angarakha	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
85	Topi	Shirobhushan	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
86	Patuka	Katibandha	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
87	Majetro	Odhani	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
88	Gajal	Anjan	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
89	<u>Pote</u>	Kachamani	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
90	Tilhari	Subarnabhushan	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
91	Bulaki	Nasabhushan	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
92	Dhungri	Karnabhushan	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
93	Baju	Angad	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
94	Panga	Hilo / Jhamela	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
95	Khirro	Ksheerbriksha	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
96	Dhodhro	Kotar	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
97	Bhyang	Riktata	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
98	Jhyappa	Akasmata	Deshaj (Dhwanatmak)	[1]
99	Khurmur	Astabyasta	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[2]
100	Khasro	Achakan	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]
101	Chiplo	Pichchhil	Deshaj (Jharro Raithane)	[1]

4. Linguistic sunshine and deep analysis

Looking at the long table above, we can understand how great the contribution of our native brothers' languages is in keeping the Nepali language alive. Balkrishna Pokharel has said in his famous book *Nepali Language and Literature* (2031) that the more a language is connected to the soil, the stronger and more reliable it becomes.

For example, when we go into the kitchen and cook the vegetables 'pindalu', 'tama', 'sinki', and 'chrau', we are not eating some foreign or imported culture. Those words have become so ingrained in the Nepali vernacular from various branches of the Tibeto-Burmese family that they are indistinguishable.

Similarly, the South-east words, like 'kera', 'chamal/camal' and 'katar', which come from the Munda languages of our family, have permeated our daily lives. If the Jharroist movement had not embraced these words, we would today be forced to carry the burden of unfamiliar words like 'kadliphall' or 'tandul'.

Jharrovada does not mean hatred towards other languages. Its real meaning is simple: why borrow fake rice from a neighbour when you already have corn flour at home? The Nepali language may have a grammar and verb system mainly rooted in Prakrit and Indo-Aryan traditions, but its vocabulary carries the smell of Nepal's own soil.

Words like "Jhismise", "Jhyappa", and "Chisrikka" give Nepali a vivid and lively sound. Such native expressions make the language more expressive and closer to everyday life.

5. Conclusion

The struggle to protect the originality of the Nepali language is still continuing. In the past, Nepalis had to be protected from excessive Sanskritisation. Today, it also faces pressure from English influence and urban hybrid language. Forgetting native words like "Chilaune" and "Uttis" growing in our own land while admiring only foreign words is a form of linguistic dependence.

This brief study of 101 words shows that the real beauty and richness of Nepali lie in its indigenous roots. The more we use native Jharra words, the stronger our Nepali identity becomes. Therefore, we should move away from overly Sanskritised, foreign, and complicated language and speak and write with confidence in the words that have grown from our own soil. That is the true pride of a Jharrovadi and a Nepali.

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Theme 2: The Ideology of Purification and Sanskritisation

[5] Alphabetisation and Sanskritisation of Nepali: Learning from Devanagari-Based Languages

Summary

There has been a trend in the Nepali language over the last few decades to regularise terms such as 'सङ्गीत' ('music') from 'संगीत' ('music'), 'अङ्ग्रेजी' ('English') from 'अंग्रेजी' ('English'), and 'सङ्घ' ('union') from 'संघ' ('union'). In the face of such perceived linguistic purification, it becomes evident how phonetic necessity, power relation among languages, and Sanskritist orthography are reflected. The orthographical debate on Nepali is analysed from perspectives of linguistic democracy, phonetics and sociolinguistics. Various practical, experimental and simplified writings by other Devanagari-using languages, like Hindi, are brought into perspective to identify which aspects can serve as lessons for Nepali. In the concluding parts of the article, it is put forward that multilingualism, practicality and simplicity, not Sanskritist purity, should be the driving principle of Nepali language development.

Keywords: Nepali language, spelling, Sanskritisation, Devanagari, sociolinguistics, linguistic democracy

Introduction

Language is a dynamic cultural system that evolves with society; it is not a static, unchanging structure. In Nepali, the idea of a "pure language" appears to have been reinforced, particularly with the establishment of a contemporary nation. The Sanskrit-based spelling was recognised as "pure" when the Nepali language was standardised through academic institutions, government, media, and schools. This can be seen, for instance, in the practice of writing 'सङ्गीत' ('music') instead of 'संगीत' ("music").

However, there is disagreement about whether these modifications have made the language more scientific or detracted from its widespread use. Forms like 'सङ्गीत', meaning "music", have been perceived by many Nepali language users as being overly complicated, difficult to look at, or based on Sanskrit. This emphasises the tension between linguistic democracy and purification.

This article's goals are to critically examine the Sanskrit-based orthography that the Nepali language developed, contrast it with the practices of languages like Hindi that employ the Devanagari script, and investigate the potential for an inclusive and useful development of the Nepali language.

Linguistic purification and acculturation

Linguistic refinement is the attempt to shield a language against "impure" influences. These initiatives are frequently linked to nationalism, cultural supremacy, or linguistic standardisation (Thomas, 1991). In the Nepali language, "purification" is generally interpreted as Sanskritisation.

Nepali is an Indo-Aryan language that is derived from Khas Prakrit (Grierson, 1927). Although Sanskrit has had a significant influence on Nepali, the language has not evolved straight from Sanskrit. However, in the modern era, Sanskrit grammar and vocabulary have received a lot of attention in order to make Nepali a "higher" and "civilised" language. Some scholars refer to this development as "sanskritisation" (Onta, 1996).

The attempt to make "सङ्गीत" out of "संगीत" is another example of this trend. Although phonetic purity is the foundation here, the underlying goal appears to be to standardise Sanskrit-based forms.

The conflict between phonology and popular usage

The main argument of the "सङ्गीत" proponents is phonetic accuracy. Since "ङ्ग" is a compound sound in the Nepali alphabet, it is believed that writing "सङ्गीत" gets closer to the pronunciation. This phonetic principle is a perspective based on phonetic principles.

But sociolinguistics does not consider language to be merely a mechanical copy of sounds. Language is a system that is validated through social use (Saussure, 1983). If a word has been used as "संगीत" for a long time and has not caused any confusion in meaning, the question arises as to whether it is necessary to change it.

According to Chomsky (1972), language is a creative social behaviour of the human community. Therefore, linguistic norms must match the usage of society. Language cannot be made sustainable by mere classical or grammatical insistence.

In this context, "linguistic economy", or the principle of linguistic economy, is also important. People generally tend to choose forms that are short, easy, and quick to use. Forms like "संगीत" seem to have survived in popular use for this reason.

Learning from Devanagari languages , including Hindi

Languages using the Devanagari script, such as Hindi, Marathi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, and Newari, have distinct spelling conventions. Nepali can acquire valuable things from these languages.

1. An application-focused approach to Hindi

Common Hindi terms include "संगीत", "अंग्रेजी", and "संघ". Although Hindi takes words from Sanskrit, it does not require that all words be written in a strictly phonetic or Sanskrit-like fashion. This has made the language more accessible to the public.

Example:- अंग्रेजी (Hindi).

- अङ्ग्रेजी (modern Nepali).

The Hindi writing system is generally simple and user-friendly. This is why Hindi is said to have expanded rapidly among a large audience.

2. Marathi's flexibility Despite having a Sanskrit-based lexicon, the language has adopted vernacular pronunciations. This appears to establish a balance between standard and informal.

3. Potential Learning for Nepalis

The Nepali language can be learnt in the following ways:

- Prioritising public use. - Minimising unnecessarily complicated ligatures.
- Using simple alphabets at school.
- Accepting linguistic diversity.
- Making standardisation democratic.

This way the Nepali language may become more accessible and functional for its users. Language democracy and multilingual Nepal The constitution of 2072 BS in Nepal acknowledges the country's multilingualism. Following the 6th article, all mother tongues used in Nepal are recognised as national languages, which is the very foundation of language democracy.

However, it is still clear in reality that standardisation of Nepali is proceeding along the line of a Sanskrit-orientated ideology, which has the effect of undermining the effect of indigenous languages in Nepal. To ensure that Nepali can effectively be used as a common language, it should incorporate wordings, styles, and phrases from the peoples' own languages. As Bourdieu (1991) states, language and power and cultural capital are linked. According to this theory, a deeply Sanskritised Nepali will be a step towards furthering the dominance of certain classes in language. Thus, a people-orientated and inclusive alphabet is needed for language democracy.

Conclusion

The conflict over "संगीत" versus "सङ्गीत" isn't just the spelling but also the question of the future of the Nepali language, linguistic democracy and orientation of culture. The trend to purify the Nepali language using only Sanskrit would be the demise of the Nepali language, whereas grounding it in public usage, simple, and multilateral (multilingual and indigenous) orientation would make it a much more live language. Such practical, user-friendly orientation can be borrowed from languages such as Hindi using Devanagari. Nepali will have to learn from such instances to have a more democratic and understandable orthography, which would be consistent with the real variety of the Nepali language.

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[6] Purification, acculturation of the Nepali language and the linguistic future of multilingual Nepal: A decolonial and constitutional debate

1. Introduction

Nepali Language Day, observed every year in Nepal, revives the debate of preservation, development, and usage of the Nepali language. The phrase 'Let's purify the Nepali language', at face value, seems to support the cause of linguistic discipline and standardisation, but it has, beneath, the politics of language dominance, cultural superiority and identities. Specifically, the trend of Sanskritisation in Nepali has impacted its original, unique foundation and its multilingual nature as well as the linguistic heritage of Nepal, which has been the central subject for linguistic and sociologic studies.

Nepali is originally a Khas Prakrit-based language, not derived from Sanskrit but influenced by it. (Regmi, 1976). Modern Nepali has, however, been established with the strong influence of Sanskrit grammar, vocabulary and its state institutions in the Hindu state. This trend has been referred to by some as Sanskritisation, or linguistic centralisation (Onta, 1996). In this article, the discussion about the purification of the Nepali language has been discussed in linguistic, sociological and constitutional perspectives, and an academic review of the issue of inclusive development of the Nepali language in the context of a multilingual Nepal will be presented.

2. Origin of the Nepali language and its relation to Sanskrit

The Nepali language evolved from the Khas language, which is an Indo-Aryan language. George Grierson described Nepali 'Parbatiya', or KhasKura (Grierson, 1927). Khas developed from Prakrit and its corruptions, which were in use in the Himalayas; its relation with Sanskrit is one of influence, not origin.

It is a natural process for a language to borrow words from another; however, in linguistics, if a language overpowers the grammatical structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation of another language, the concern arises about the politics of the language and the cultural domination by another language (Bourdieu, 1991). Use of excessive Sanskrit-derived words in the Nepali language was systemised, especially in the domain of state institutions, administration, education and communications. For example, 'vidhyalaya', 'prashasan', 'badbibad', 'samanwaya', 'anushasan' and so on, while the original vernacular form had already diminished.

It is also criticised that Sanskritisation in the Nepali name of 'purification' has created detachment of the Nepali language from the masses. According to Noam Chomsky, language is a system of society; thus, it is the society which forms the language, not language as an abstract object to capture in a classical structure. (Chomsky, 1972).

3. Linguistic purification or culturalisation?

'Purification' is itself a linguistic term and controversial. No language is 'pure'. All languages are mixed, borrowed, and intercommunicated historically. The Nepali language has influence from Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, English, Tibetan, Maithili, Newari, Limbu, Magar, Bhojpuri and so on.

According to Saussure, "Language is a system of signs. And as it is a system, it develops like any other system in relation to the society where it lives" (Saussure, 1916/1983). Efforts towards 'purification' usually come with the aim of keeping intact some culture or politics.

In the context of Nepal, tribal studies and multilingualism research repeatedly point to the fact that the practice of making Sanskritised Nepali 'standard' has marginalised other ethnic communities (Toba, 1992). It was especially through Rana and Panchayat regimes that the nationalist conception of 'one nation, one garment' had made the Nepali language the vehicle for state power and national identity and made the Nepali language turn itself into Sanskrit.

In light of the linguistic decolonisation process, this reduced the local knowledge systems. The Limbu, Tamang, Gurung, Tharu, Nepal Bhasa, Awadhi, Urdu languages, and so on turned into merely 'local' or 'domestic' languages, while Nepali had become 'national', 'civilised', and 'formal'. Pierre Bourdieu also called this 'linguistic capital', i.e., they claimed 'unequal distribution of linguistic capital'.

4. Multilingual Nepal and the Constitutional System

Nepal is a multilingual country according to the Constitution of Nepal 2072 BS. Article 6 says that "all the languages spoken in Nepal shall be the languages of the nation." And Article 7 says that Nepali in the Devanagari script shall be the official language of the Union, but individual states may make their own majority language as an official language.

These constitutional provisions are crucial in achieving the goal of linguistic democracy. It creates the possibility of considering the Nepali language not as the single dominant language but as a common link language of the multilingual nation. Toba writes, "In a multilingual country such as Nepal, unless it is a linguistically democratic language policy, the result is likely to be cultural difference and social distance." (Toba, 1992).

On the practical ground, still, Sanskritised Nepali is prevailing in education, administration, universities, courts and media. This has also made the students and general people whose mother tongue is not Nepali struggle to use it. The language used in Nepali textbooks at the school level, as shown by the research, is found to be too Sanskritised for rural students and students whose mother tongues are not Nepali.

5. Potential for inclusive development of the Nepali language

The development of the Nepali language should be framed in terms of 'democratisation' and 'inclusion', instead of 'purification'. The following may be considered as key factors for that:

5.1 The use of loanwords from native language

More than 100 languages are spoken in Nepal. These languages have very rich vocabulary in relation to nature, farming, philosophy, relations, geography, music, religion, etc. Using loanwords from these languages can enhance the expressiveness of the Nepali language. The examples of loanwords in the

Nepali language from native languages, such as Mundhum, Chyabrung, Lhosar, Sakela, Guthi and Rodi, have already made the language multicultural.

5.2 Importance of Nepali speaking community

The standard form of the Nepali language must not be a Sanskrit-based bureaucratic language but rather be based on the speaking language of the people. It must do away with the tendency to perceive folk languages, regional dialects and original phrasing as "impure".

5.3 Multilingual Education Policy

The constitution ensures the right to education in mother tongues. A multilingual approach where the mother language is taught along with Nepali at the primary level further strengthens the Nepali language and establishes it as a common language rather than a competing one.

5.4 Use of regional language for word formulation

When creating new words, use native languages other than Sanskrit as a base. For instance, there is an extremely rich body of concept-based terms related to nature, community life, coexistence and spirituality in indigenous languages, which makes the Nepali language more democratic and multicultural.

5.5 Reconsidering linguistic colonialism

Language is not only a medium of communication but also a structure of power and knowledge. Thus, in developing the Nepali language, the state needs to officially acknowledge the contributions of historically marginalised language communities.

6. Conclusion:

The debate on 'purifying' the Nepali language is not merely linguistic; it is political, ideological and cultural too. The Nepali language is not born of Sanskrit, but it is a historical development of the Khas language itself that has taken its present form interacting with different language communities. Therefore, the future of the Nepali language lies not in acculturation but in multilingual inclusion.

Though Nepal as a multilingual nation has been adopted in the constitution, the Nepali language should be developed as a language of common communication and as a channel of inclusive national identity. Only through incorporation of native terms, concepts and knowledge can the Nepali language become Nepali. Otherwise, there are risks of isolating it from common life while absorbing it culturally in the name of linguistic purity.

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[7] Sanskritisation under the guise of “purification”: The unseasonal intervention of Sanskrit-Tatsamism in the Nepali language

Summary

In the last five decades, a mechanical, essentially Sanskrit-identical, spelling and vocabulary imposition has begun under the guise of a mission to "purify" Nepali. This trend of standardising forms like "sangit", "angreji", and "sangh" in Nepali, which originated from Khas Prakrit, is multi-ethnic and, based on popular usage, was strategically taken ahead during the era of pure nation-building (from the 2020s). It not only attempted to monopolise the vivid identity of the Nepali language, but it also lost its grammatical purity, making it a humorous example of "purification without purification". The current article examines the historical context of this movement, its ideological foundations, why it is linguistically inaccurate, when and how the "sangit" issue arose, and, ultimately, if this effort has become not only a foul joke but also a linguistic injustice.

Keywords: Nepali language, purification, Sanskritisation, identity, spelling controversy, music, Supreme Court,

1. Background

Amidst Kathmandu's 'diabetes', a strange disease has been plaguing the Nepali language for the past three decades – sanskarisation under the guise of 'purification'. From the streets to the chambers of parliament, the same cry is heard: "Our language has deteriorated; it needs to be purified." But the reality is this campaign is neither purification nor scientific. It is simply a cultural power-showing phenomenon. Pointing to this context, Nawa Raj Subba has defined it as “linguistic power, cultural dominance, and identity politics” (Subba, “संगीत वा सङ्गीत?”, 2026).

In this article we will raise the question:

- When, why, and how did the burden of Sanskrit words come to the Nepali language?
- Why was the process of making "music" into "music" started, and why is it pointless?
- How did this process become not only absurd, but also ridiculous and undemocratic?

1.1 Historical Background: Influence of Sanskrit and the Beginning of Standardization

The Nepali language originally evolved from Khas Prakrit, which is not directly derived from Sanskrit but rather an evolved form of Sanskrit (Regmi, 1976). The Rana administration, the school curriculum from the time of Jung Bahadur, and later the Pragya Pratishthan (2014) began to develop a standard for Nepali language writing. The original inspiration for this standard was the imitation of Sanskrit grammar. By the 2020–2030s, the formulation of a “pure” Nepali language had entered government use (Subba, 2026).

But the problem arose when this “purity” was focused on the phonetics of only one community, mainly the Brahmin-Khetri dialect, and the Sanskrit-identical word list. This established a Panditi Varna tradition as the standard, not the overall linguistic identity of Nepal.

2. Key Events

2.1 The institutional Intervention

The demand for संगीत “music” to be spelt as सङ्गीत “music” seems to have gained strength in the 2060s. Initially, this campaign to ensure the spelling of common words in the field of music and singing later became the paradigm for all words with the 'negative' expression found in folk etymology 'नङ + गति - अङ' ('nail' + 'move' – ‘ang’ sound) – अङ्ग्रेजी ‘English’ as अङ्ग्रेजी ‘English’, and Sangh ‘Sangh’ as सङ्घ ‘Sangh’.

Subba argues that this change was more of an idealistic propaganda than a practical one. He says that the Nepali alphabet has been forcibly adapted to the pronunciation structure of Sanskrit without considering its actual sound and versatility (Subba, 2026).

Many amendments to the academy and the curriculum development centre were written with this mindset. For example, the word ‘music’ was also used officially in the ‘Nepal Academy of Music and Drama Act, 2064’ (Nepal Academy of Music and Drama Act, 2064).

Administrative example: The Koshi Pradesh case

In 2079 BS, a disagreement emerged over the government's decision to name Province No. 1 'Koshi Pradesh' because the word 'Koshi' is Sanskrit-influenced. Opposition parties said that 'Koshi' is also a Sanskrit word; it obscures the local ethnic identity (Kirant, Limbuwan). The name should have been 'Sagarmatha' or 'Kirant' (BBC, Niraula B., 2080). This demonstrates that the "pure" version of the Sanskrit word became understood only by the highly educated upper-class pundit tradition, not by the general public.

3. Why is such “purification” wrong? – Five linguistic perspectives

First, language is a 'life system', not a 'heartless code'.

Language is an evolving phenomenon that, by its very nature, evolves through use, through society, through history and through usage itself (Labov, 1994). Linguistics defines language as a social phenomenon that constantly changes and has no static or classical grammar. Thus, it would seem rather unproductive to try to impose "सङ्गीत", "अङ्ग्रेजी", and "सङ्घ" onto a popular stream of "संगीत", "अंग्रेजी", and "संघ", which people commonly speak, and it seems to be a rather unnecessary interference on the smooth naturalness of the stream of language.

It is rather like trying to re-Sanskritise a village stream "खोल्सा" as "प्रज्ञानदी" when, in actual fact, use by people is being imposed with the false concept of purity. As language can become usable through the use of people (the history of linguistics proves it so far), language can be cut off from public life if it becomes too excessively classicised. According to William Labov, "The research that has taken place into sociolinguistics proves the indispensable part played by use within the community in the change of language. Noam Chomsky himself has paid due regard to the live nature of language, that is, language in relation to the human's use and innovation.

Subba (2026) argues, "The development of the Nepali language should be on use, inclusivity and simplicity rather than its purification using Sanskrit elements." This viewpoint conforms with modern

sociolinguistics, which has to do with the easiness of use by and inclusion of multilingualism in language in a manner not dominated by a quest for purity centred on power.

Second, Nepali is a natural development, not a direct descendant of Sanskrit.

If Sanskrit is the standard of "purity", then most of the original, non-synonymous words of Nepali, spoken by a semi-Aryan-speaking people (jhyau, pani, haat, nidanu— all of which are the result of popular usage)—would be considered impure. This is a kind of linguistic 'nationalist arrogance' (Camel, 1996).

Third, this is not scientific but 'verna-relativism'.

The alternative use of 'ड' and 'ङ्ग' is regular in phonology; the legitimacy of calling one more pure than the other is merely a campaign without any solid evidence from phonology.

The sound debate between 'ड' and 'ङ्ग': The essence of varna-relativity

A. Let's first understand – what exactly are 'ड' and 'ङ्ग'?

The fifth consonant of the Nepali Devanagari script is 'ङ' (nasal, larynx). It is the only consonant. 'ङ्ग' means the combination of 'ङ' + 'ग' (conjunct consonant). It is understood that 'ङ' is the first consonant and 'ग' is the second.

Acoustics (phonetics) analyses how both are pronounced:

Pronunciation of 'ङ': When 'ङ' comes alone, it is pronounced from the throat like 'न' but as a five-letter syllable of the 'क' class. Example: In the word 'आङ', 'ङ' is pronounced only at the end.

Pronunciation of 'ङ्ग': When it is used between vowels or at the beginning of a word, both 'ङ' and 'ग' are heard. Example: In 'गङ्गा', 'सङ्गीत', 'सङ्घ', 'प्रसङ्ग'

But here's the problem: in the practical language of Nepali, many people pronounce 'सङ्गीत' (i.e., " followed by 'स' with a moon dot + 'ग') rather than 'सङ्गीत'. The difference between the two is only in the 'time' and 'wave' of the sound; the meaning does not change.

Fourth, what is 'Verna relativism'?

Here, 'varna relativism' refers to the tendency to consider only one script tradition as true and declare another form to be 'impure'.

In other words, if we look at the Nepali alphabet, the use of the Chandrabindu (ँ), the subjoined 'nga' (ङ्ग), and the Anusvara (ं) should be alternative choices based on sound and context. However, some grammar reformers insisted on considering only the script-based characters as pure. As a result, certain rules were forcibly imposed in place of the nasalised sounds (ँ) that come naturally through phonetics.

This linguistic development has become character-based (adapted to the script) rather than phonetic (adapted to the spoken dialect)—creating a situation where only what is seen in writing is considered pure, while how people actually speak is treated as impure. For example, while words like 'टंक' and 'फुङलिङ' (Phungling) have traditionally been spoken and written this way, some have started writing them as 'टङ्क' and 'फुङ्गलिङ्ग' (Phungling) in a forced race to make the spelling look "pure".

Fifth, what does phonology say? – Example analysis

The first lesson of phonetics is that the distinction between 'pure' and 'impure' in a language is more a social convention than a scientific one; as long as there is no difference in meaning, both forms are correct.

Example 1: 'संगीत' / 'सङ्गीत'

'संगीत': Here 'ँ' (anuswar) is used. In pronunciation, 's' is followed by a nasal sound, followed by 'geet'. It is practically simple and easy.

'सङ्गीत': Here, the 'ङ' is separate, followed by 'गीत'. No significant difference in pronunciation is heard (only analytically, the 'ङ' may be a little longer when pronounced, but the average listener will not recognise the difference).

Therefore, both pronunciations are practically the same; they convey the same concept.

Example 2: 'अंग्रेजी' / 'अङ्ग्रेजी'

Most Nepali speakers speak 'अंग्रेजी' (अं + ग्रेजी). 'अङ्ग्रेजी' (ङ् + ग्रेजी) was demanded in the textbook standards.

From a phonetic perspective, both 'अं' and 'अङ्' are nasal sounds. The meaning is not different; it is the same for about 99% of speakers.

Example 3: 'लंका' vs. 'लङ्का'

The 'लङ्का' of the Ramayana is often written as 'लंका' in Nepali. There is no concrete error here either. The use of 'ङ' reflects Sanskrit, but in the natural development of Nepali, 'ँ' (anuswar) has become more common.

Where is the lack of 'scientificity'?

Scientificity means that to prove a hypothesis or rule, repeatable, objective data is required. There is no third-party verified sound-lab data to support the claim that only 'ङ' is pure and 'ँ' is impure.

Similarly, if we look at the pronunciation of 'ङ' and 'ँ' on a spectrogram, these two are not phonetically different because the Nepali phonetic tradition has accepted the use of all the 'Panchamavarna' (ङ, ञ, ण, न, म्) in the practice of giving them the form of Anuswara.

If someone claims the opposite, they would have to provide evidence that 'these two change the message' by reciting the pronunciation of these two, which is not possible.

Why is this just a 'campaign'?

The demand to write 'Sangeet' has long been a linguistic purist campaign that has been going on only in the pundits' and academics' circles of Kathmandu. On the one hand, this campaign ignores the usage of the vast majority of the linguistic community (who write/speak 'संगीत' – 'Sangit'), and on the other hand, it does not introduce any new grammatical rules but only wants to revive an ancient script tradition.

No independent phonetic evidence is presented to support their claim. Therefore, phoneticians call this trend script-relativism. It is known as where the artificial rules of script are placed above the phonetic reality. In fact, the basis of language is sound, not script. A script is only a means of expressing sound in written form. It is not considered scientific from a linguistic point of view to consider only the tradition of characters or letters as supreme, ignoring the pronunciation, sound structure, and practical reality of a language.

Modern linguistics also considers human speech and sound (phonemes) to be the main foundation of language. Letters or scripts are just rules created later by society for its own convenience (Saussure, 1916/1983). For this reason, different languages of the world can write the same sound in their own types of letters, but their actual pronunciation remains the same. Therefore, to correctly understand the natural development of language, it is necessary to give first priority to living human speech and pronunciation rather than to the rules of artificial grammar.

In common Nepali:

‘ड’ and ‘झ’ are alternative sound structures. Both ‘संगीत’ and ‘सङ्गीत’ are pronounced almost the same. Neither one has a greater meaning than the other, nor does phonetics provide any basis for calling one ‘pure’ and the other ‘impure’. Therefore, this should not be called a ‘purification’, but a mere campaign of noise.

"The laboratory of phonetics has confirmed that the pronunciation of 'संगीत' and 'सङ्गीत' are not considered to be two different sounds. These are only differences in writing. The attempt to eliminate one by considering it pure and the other not a purity but a colonial practice of the dominant tradition. " (Subba, "संगीत or सङ्गीत?", 2026)

Similarly, as pointed out by Dr. Yogendra Prasad Yadav, a phonological analysis shows that converting the consonant ङ into a full consonant is an unnecessary interference with linguistic history. According to him, the consonant ङ is actually just a sound (nasal sign) emitted from the nose, whose function is to aid pronunciation according to the word. Forcibly changing it into a separate and permanent syllable is against the natural laws of the language. How to use Consonants in Nepali depend on the person's speech and pronunciation environment. Therefore, trying to change it to a single fixed letter by making strict rules is an artificial interference with the natural development of the language. For this reason, phonetics emphasises the actual pronunciation and usage of humans rather than the strict rules of spelling.

The regular use of the alternate use of ‘ड’ and ‘झ’ means that both represent the same sound group because the Nepali sound system is flexible. When we fall into ‘script-relativity’, we worship not the sound, but only a form of script as an idol – which is contrary to the science of living language. Therefore, this campaign is just a ‘momentary and false cultural debate’, not scientific accuracy.

If you still have any doubts, try saying ‘संगीत’ five times and ‘सङ्गीत’ five times. You won’t know the difference. That is scientific proof.

Ferdinand de Saussure: Structuralist linguistics has also clarified that the primary basis of language is sound and that writing is merely its representative system (Saussure, 1916/1983).

Academic chaos arises.

There is a massive disconnect between our educational curriculum and actual public use. While the Curriculum Development Centre insists on teaching सङ्गीत, university students are literally writing संगीत in their exams. This emphasis on artificial spelling rather than on linguistic proficiency puts great stress on students. This brings about the increase of linguistic ambiguity, makes learning hard, and possibly diminishes one's confidence in the language when applying different criteria for the same language in public use, in the educational process and in media. It poses the danger that language may transform from a means of communication to a means of error-seeking for examination.

Concerning this issue, the Supreme Court of Nepal, in the important judgement "Regarding the Nepali language and alphabet", declared that "no particular institution has the authority of changing the alphabet, way of writing and grammar of the Nepali language." The court emphasised that language cannot be viewed as something that can be changed by the administration, as it is something that is intertwined with social practices, the conventions of people and academic traditions in addition to a shared cultural heritage, and there is something called a 'need for discussion of various stakeholders, linguistic bases and public use'. This judgement may have upheld the need for discussion of many stakeholders and linguistic bases along with public use when making policies regarding language.

Similarly, sociolinguistics analyses the kinds of norms that can evolve based on social experiment, education, communication and cultural acceptance over a long span of time and can hardly be prescribed from the top (Labov, 1994). Accordingly, the future of the Nepali language is not a language purified artificially on the basis of Sanskrit but one developed on the basis of its use in public, multilingualism and the grounds of practicality and ease of education. A language should be judged by the way it is used by the people rather than how rigidly it is constrained.

4. Accusations of cultural bias

The argument of cultural bias. If the dialects of Eastern Nepali, Sikkimese, Darjeelingi, Majhi, Limbu, Rai or other communities are called "impure" by considering Sanskrit traditions and the Brahmanical concept of purity as the ultimate standard of language, then it does not seem consistent with the original ideals of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual Nepal. Language is not merely a set of grammatical forms but a cultural symbol, which carries along the history, identity, memory, and cultural existence of a community. Perhaps calling a standard form of a language "pure" and another "corrupt" is an actual representation of relations of linguistic power.

As pointed out, "the standard language is constructed by the centres of political, educational and cultural power, rather than being naturally superior" (Bourdieu, 1991); the inclination to consider Nepali spoken in Kathmandu as the standard and those of the eastern hills, Terai or Himalayan regions as inferior might actually suppress the linguistic varieties of the communities. In actuality, the variations in form of addresses like 'हजुर', 'तपाईं', 'तिमी', 'तैं', the pronunciations of words like 'संगीत/सङ्गीत', 'दही/दहि', 'छैन/छैन्', etc. are natural linguistic, social and cultural variations.

Pierre Bourdieu: The language is "symbolic power" – that is, he defines language in terms of symbolic power. He suggests that designating some language form as 'correct' or 'prestigious' has not just linguistic connotations but is also inherently a sociopolitical act related to power and dominance (Bourdieu, 1991).

Therefore, in a multilingual country like Nepal, a strict definition of linguistic purity might inadvertently promote ethnic, regional or cultural chauvinism.

The Constitution of Nepal also defines the nation as having "a multitude of linguistic and cultural characteristics as the identity of the nation". Thus, the development of Nepali must be viewed from a holistic perspective – multilingually and multiculturally. Denouncing the pronunciation and vocabulary of a Limbu, Rai, Gurung, Tharu, Newar or Madhesi speaker of Nepali as 'wrong' will not be merely a linguistic judgement but also a statement of cultural recognition and dignity.

The construction "Where are you going?" might be more prevalent than "Where are you going?" in the Nepali language of Darjeeling and Sikkim. Demanding pronunciation like "संगीत" to be spoken as "सङ्गीत" when it comes naturally to Eastern Nepalis is a sign of classical prescription overriding linguistic reality. Similarly, speakers from various tribal backgrounds speak Nepali in tune with the phonological system of their native language due to language contact. This is a process of linguistic naturalness, not error.

Linguistics in the modern world considers linguistic variety a source of dynamism rather than weakness. As Labov writes, "Linguistic change and diversity are natural, ongoing processes within society, and the idea of a single, uniform 'pure' language may only be ideological" (Labov, 1994). It thus seems appropriate that the future of the Nepali language does not confine itself to a single standard (Sanskrit-based) but to the principle of multilingual existence, public usage, and cultural respect.

5. Ugly jokes: Standardizing 'Sanskritist humour'

But many were of the opinion that forcing it to be "सङ्गीत" in many cases turned it into an unnecessary complexity rather than a linguistic reform. For the common people have already been reading and speaking "music" all their lives, so when "music" was written and then read in many places, it was unknown and alien to most. Instead of being used to facilitate public communication, the language was made incomprehensible.

In this process of changing the language, some decisions of linguists were even seen to be artificial to the extent that they turned into an object of jokes in the public forum. An attitude like "Only people who know Sanskrit speak good Nepali" became so much criticised by the masses. They felt the language was detaching itself from the real Nepalese form because people began to apply it according to a sort of Sanskritised rule of its structure and not by what they already knew of it from their social environment.

Before the Supreme Court order, there had been several administrative decisions aimed at making the Nepali script more Sanskrit-orientated. However, such exaggerated suggestions were dropped after the court order clearly indicated that an institution or individual cannot bring in an alteration in the nature of the language on its own. It is believed that this had set an example to the world that the Nepali language must develop by focusing on ease of use, ease of education and public acceptability rather than on any formalisation or abstraction.

Thus, it is believed by many linguistic analysts that some such orders or attempts should be treated as a "formal linguistic satire". In their views, providing unnecessary burdens of Sanskrit in language to make it 'natural and simple' should rather be interpreted as the creation of complexity rather than the

progress of the language. Any language that people can speak, write and understand easily is its living form.

6. How could it be better? – Suggestions for Nepal Academy and Ministry of Education

A. Facilitation of public use

Instead of mandating "सङ्गीत" as the word to be used, a flexible policy accepting both "संगीत" and "सङ्गीत" would have been much more practical and scientific. Prioritising the language people use in their day-to-day speech and writing with ease is one of the fundamental principles of modern linguistics. For example, in English, both British/American English ("colour/color" and "centre/center") usages are accepted and are not criticised as erroneous. Similarly, a usage-based flexibility in the Nepali language would lead to less linguistic friction.

B. Accepting diverse belief systems

Declaring the languages spoken in Eastern Nepal or in the Darjeeling-Sikkim region – Limbu, Rai, or Western Nepal – Doteli, Bajureli, Tharu, or Gurung as substandard and non-pure is discrimination towards the languages and their speakers. All the varieties or dialects are equally considered real languages according to sociolinguistics. In the case of the Nepali language, the use of "जा'छ" in Doteli, "क्ता जाँदैछौ?" in Eastern Nepal, etc. Are only the outcomes of the respective language's own linguistic history and phonological setup. Thus, they must be seen as the natural variety of Nepali rather than errors.

C. A scientific typology committee

The decisions concerning language should be made according to linguistics research, empirical data and multilingual participation rather than by any political or administrative fiat. Hence, a permanent "Scientific Alphabetisation and Language Policy Committee" involving experts of Nepali, Maithili, Nepal Bhasa, Limbu, Tharu, Tamang, Gurung, etc. Should be formed. Language policy is not just about purifying a particular language but also about the coexistence of different languages within a nation.

D. Simple and Practical

If using "संगीत", "अंग्रेजी", or "संघ" does not create any problem for the communication between speakers of Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, or Hindustani, there must be a clear reason why a strictly Sanskritist form is to be imposed on the Nepali language. The simpler and more people-friendly the language is, the more widely accepted it is. An excessive amount of classical grammatical burden may complicate language learning.

E. Vision of accepting indigenous language contribution

In addition to Sanskrit, the Khas language, the Prakrit-Apabhramsa heritage, and the Tibet-Burman languages all had a significant effect on Nepali. Linguists have demonstrated how Nepali's long-term contact with the Tamang, Gurung, Magar, Limbu, Rai, Sherpa, and other languages of the hill and Himalayan areas has influenced many features of Nepali vocabulary, sounds, and sentence structure. For instance, a lot of Nepali words, like "डण्डा", "भीर", "लाहुरे", "झोला", "चिया", etc., are believed to have originated from different local and Tibeto-Burman sources. Similarly, its usage of honorific forms, the flexible

sentence structure and a few phonological tendencies also reflect the influence of Himalayan linguistic contact. Hence, seeing the development of the Nepali language only through the lens of Sanskrit-based grammar has denied the multiple layers of the development of the language.

In modern linguistics, contact among languages and their mixed development are regarded as natural processes. In this respect, Yogendra Prasad Yadav and other Nepali linguists have also pointed out the need for accepting the multicultural nature of the Nepali language and including the contribution of indigenous languages to its development. Therefore, the future development of the Nepali language should be based on the principle of scientific inclusiveness, use by the public and peaceful coexistence of languages.

7. Conclusion

The Nepali language is not a laboratory of some Sanskritist movement; rather, it has been enriched and developed through the daily communication of thousands of people, through the lifestyle in the hill region, through diverse ethnic communities and a long historical journey of contact between Khas-Aryan and Tibeto-Burmese languages. Thus, an attempt to make the Nepali language only a "pure" and Sanskritist form risks shrinking its actual social and historical dimensions. When a language is alive, it is a language used by the people, and without them, it is confined only to the books.

The word "सङ्गीत", used as the official word, does not make the Nepali language scientific or high-level; it only seems to be intellectual forcing or artificial purification if the words do not follow public usage, pronunciation, and practical purpose. The modern linguists state that the quality of a language is determined not by its adherence to classical languages but by its ease of use and acceptability by the society (Labov, 1994). The argument to follow usage and scholarly opinion on language was emphasised when the Supreme Court of Nepal intervened in the debate concerning the Nepali alphabet and ruled that the government cannot create a single body to dictate its usage of language. It seemed that they regarded the language as the property of the public.

Actually, the Nepali language is not an enclosed 'canon' but a dynamic social system that has evolved by accepting new words and evolving with the experience of different communities. Today, countless words are from the different sources, like Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, English, Tamang, Newari, Limbu, Tharu, Tibetan, etc., and are accepted and used freely. It is the hybridisation which has made the Nepali language a rich one. Hence, an attempt to make it "pure" will result in the deprivation of its manifold nature.

Therefore, the question is not "Which word is nearest to Sanskrit?"; rather, it should be "Which language do people understand, speak and adopt more easily?" The "सङ्गीत" heard in the marketplace, in songs, in the street, on social media, in literature, and in day-to-day usage could already be the naturally owned Nepali word for many people. Language will live if people love and practise it; otherwise, it can be a forgotten academic lesson.

William Labov: Sociolinguists have also acknowledged the richness and strength of the language through its diversity and public use. In this context, the future development of the Nepali language appears to rest on the acceptance of an inclusive, scientifically based development rather than strict, Sanskritist purification.

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[8] Decolonisation in Nepali Discourse: A Critical Analysis of Indigenous Linguistic Resistance and Political Elitism

Summary

This research paper critically analyses the internal colonisation that exists in Nepali society, politics, and language and the indigenous linguistic and political resistance that has emerged against it. The article mainly discusses two interrelated scenarios: first, the context in which indigenous words such as 'khulkyaanu', used in the vernacular of the Kirat community, are dismissed as 'vulgar' by the mainstream linguistic elite; and second, a discourse analysis of a racist poem written by the then high-ranking administrator and literary figure Rammani Acharya Dixit on the eve of the political change of 2007 BS. Franz Fanon's and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's decolonial theory, Pierre Bourdieu's symbolic violence and Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak's Subaltern. This study is based on the concept of the "revival of the indigenous language", and the objective, dialectical reinterpretation of historical facts, is the starting point for the real decolonisation of the Nepali language and history.

Keywords: decolonisation, Indigenous discourse, linguistic resistance, Brahmanism, elitist concerns, subaltern.

1. Introduction

The history-making of modern Nepal is a monoethnic, monolingual and monocultural hegemony. Hegemony in Nepal was built after the expansion of the former Gorkha state and the implementation of the Muluki Ain of 1910. This structure of internal colonisation treated the Khas-Nepali language and Hindu caste culture as "standard" and "civilised", while pushing indigenous languages, cultures, and ways of life into the category of "non-standard", "savage", and "barbaric".

In the sphere of politics, although the 2007 BS revolution overthrew the Rana monarchy and declared democracy, the power elites in terms of traditional status, administrative apparatus and cultural authority were present within the fundamental structure of the state system. The language was the most powerful tool to institutionalise such hegemony. The elite declared their language and vocabulary as "proper language" but marginalised the language of outrage, emotion and cultural expressions of the oppressed as "obscene" or "taboo language". So it is academically imperative to analyse the indigenous linguistic discourses and historical text by decentering language from a decolonial angle in the contemporary context.

2. Rationale for the study

Nepali history and language have traditionally been written from the perspective of the ruling elite. The question of marginalisation of indigenous dialects or languages by standard Literature and media and the resulting inferiority complex among them are still under-researched topics in the domain of Nepalese academia.

This study makes an attempt to connect the language politics related to "khulkyaanu" – a term representing the Kirat community's anger and resistance – and the negative perception about indigenous people among some ruling intellectuals (e.g., Ramamani Acharya Dixit's poetry) at the beginning of the

era of democracy. This paper analyses the decolonisation of the Nepali language; it is a valid study that shows us a path for how one can write and interpret historical events in academia objectively, rising above sentimentalism.

3. Theoretical framework

This research is grounded on the principles of the following three theories:

1. Linguistic Decolonisation: Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986), a Kenyan writer, argues that the most harmful attack by the colonisers is on the human mind and language. Language not only represents the human means of communication, but it is also the transmitter and storehouse of culture. A colonial or dominant language implants an inferior self-feeling on people by representing the indigenous language as "impure". Hence, to regain and repossess the native word. This is the first step towards decolonisation.

2. Symbolic Violence and Cultural Capital: Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1991) argues that elite groups turn their language and culture into "cultural capital". Using state institutions, the dominated masses are made to feel that their own language is ineffective, primitive, and uncivilised. This is symbolic violence.

3. Subaltern Concept: The subalterns had a voice and a history which, according to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) and Ranajit Guha, were often made inaudible by the regimes. The poetry of Ramamani and the interpretation of Durgahang Yakkha Rai reveal this same conflict between subaltern communities and elite power.

4. Research Methodology

This study is based on a qualitative research methodology. It involves 'critical discourse analysis' of primary and secondary historical sources. For the study, the poems of Rammani Acharya Dixit collected in Durgahang Yakkha Rai's work 'Brahminavad Virud Janajati + Utpiditvarga' (1996) and the native language discourses expressed on social media have been taken as the main texts. 'Hermeneutics' for the socio-cultural meaning of words and contextual interpretation of historical events – this method has been used.

5. Presentation and discussion

5.1. Linguistic hegemony and the decolonial renaissance of the word 'khulkyauunu'

Looking at the history of standardisation and dictionary creation of the Khas-Nepali language, it is found that words that are culturally compatible with the ruling class are given a high position. The word 'khulkyauunu', popular among the Kirat community, literally means to remove the outer layer or skin of something. It refers to the act of pulling the foreskin of the male penis in a state of anger. The mainstream 'civilised' slang of the Aryans banned or shunned it as an 'obscene', 'vulgar' or 'wild' insult.

However, from a decolonial perspective, this word is not just an obscene term; it is a 'physical and linguistic resistance' expressed against oppression and repression. (Corporeal and Linguistic Resistance) Yes. When marginalised communities do not have the political weapons to fight the state structure, they humiliate the regime through the emotional power of their native language. The statement that 'the people's revolution... did not reveal anything' has a deep political meaning that democracy could not expose or change the inner exploitative character of the elite class except for the outer cover (mukundo).

Throughout world history, indigenous or oppressed classes have turned words used to insult them into symbols of pride. There are countless examples like this:

'Queer': The queer word movement In the English language, the word 'queer' was originally used to insult, tease, and mentally weaken homosexuals or sexual minorities. It meant 'abnormal' or 'perverted'. However, in the late 1980s and 1990s, the LGBTQ+ movement proudly reclaimed the word as a means of identity (Jagos, 1996). Today it is an established academic principle in universities (queer theory). It is done.

African American Vernacular English (AAVE): In America, white rulers have been using the English language, grammar, and 'slang' spoken by Black people. (Slang) branded it as 'uneducated', 'rude' and 'criminal' language. However, the civil rights movement and hip-hop. With the rise of the culture, those 'forbidden' words are now proudly established in the mainstream of American literature, music, and academic discourse. (Smitherman, 2000) |

Māori language revival (New Zealand): British colonialists banned native Māori language discourse, labelling their cultural vocabulary as 'primitive' or 'savage'. However, through the decolonisation movement, New Zealand's state and education policies today recognise Māori words as a source of national pride (Walker, 2004).

The rejection of native, oral, and emotional words such as 'khulkyaanu' from the Nepali dictionary or their classification as rude is a form of language colonialism. The inclusion of such words within scholarly discourse represents a critical move towards the decolonisation of the Nepali language.

5.2. 2007 BS-year political transformation and elitist continuity

The poem by Rammani Acharya Dixit, quoted in Durgahang Yakkha Rai's book, is a mirror for understanding Nepali political history and the inner mindset of the ruling class. The poem was composed around the time of the revolution of 2007 BS, when the Rana regime ended for the first time in Nepal and Matrika Prasad Koirala became the prime minister on behalf of the common people.

According to Ghal Rai and Durgahang Yakkha Rai, Rammani, who was an advisor to Chandra Shumsher during the Rana period, also became an advisor to the new Prime Minister after the advent of democracy. The following lines of his poem reflect the 'elitist concerns' of the then elite class. (Elite Anxiety) Exposes:

*"Jungali swanthe tighre pakhe.
kharpane dokeko desh ho Nepal,
Bhagawan rakhiden yo yasaigari.
Yi sabhya bhaye hamro sirikhuri kaha jala?"*

Translation

*"Nepal is a country of wild, ignorant,
and backwards people who carry baskets on their backs and shoulders.
Oh God, please keep it just like this.
Because if they ever become educated and civilised,
What will happen to our wealth and privilege?"*

This poem is completely based on historical facts, as it is preserved in Dixit's family book, 'Bhalokuroko Namuna' (Publisher: Kedarmani Acharya Dixit, 2018). It can be strongly inferred from the poem that there was tremendous fear among the ruling class with the arrival of democracy that the depressed classes (Rai, Limbu, Gurung, Magar, Jyapu, Tamang, and Sherpa) would gain class awareness and they would lose their feudal privilege (Sirikhuri).

Class and caste distinction can be easily observed from the words and their meaning:

Swanthe: The Rai and Limbu people of eastern Nepal were portrayed as fools lacking intelligence and common sense.

Tigbre: Gurungs and Magars of western Nepal who tied their backs were called Bhusatighre, who did physical labour but lacked intelligence.

Pakhe: All people outside the Kathmandu Valley were declared uncivilised.

Kharpane and Doke: The indigenous Jyapu (Newar) and Tamang, Sherpa, who carry supplies and water in the valley, were reduced to being mere means of carrying heavy loads.

This classification shows that the 2007 BS revolution failed to bring any fundamental change in the lives and self-esteem of the marginalised classes, other than displacing "Shri 3 Ranaji" and installing "Bahunji" in his place.

5.3 Dialectical and balanced historical interpretation

When interpreting historical documents in an academic article, it is necessary to rise above emotional impulses and maintain dialectical and structural balance. This poem by Rammani Acharya Dixit can be interpreted from both sides as follows:

a) Perspective of tribal/neglected groups (Subaltern Perspective):

According to this perspective, this poem is an extreme racist attack on the then state. And it is the naked form of a hateful mentality. It shows that the arrival of 'democracy' in Nepal is not for the common people and the oppressed class, but only for the internal balance of power of the ruling class. It provides irrefutable evidence that there was only one. The expression 'never include a Matuwali who drinks alcohol' in the cabinet confirms that the state has prohibited inclusion as a policy.

b) Structural perspective of the ruling/elite class of the time:

Looking at it objectively, this poem reflects the 'existential crisis' and 'sense of insecurity' of the then elite class. It is an expression of. It can be considered natural for the traditional intellectuals of the time to fear that chaos could spread in society if the social stability based on casteism, which has been in place for centuries, suddenly breaks down. Some historical analysts have also put forward the defensive argument that it was a structural obligation of the then state to continue to retain 'educated and experienced' old characters for the administrative continuity of the state during the transitional period.

5.4. Institutionalized Bahunism and the Generational Transmission of Hegemony in Academic Space

Facebook posts today criticised Dixit's role in perpetuating the old Bahunist ideology. But from an academic perspective, this is simply a person-centred criticism. It is not enough to understand that. This can be seen as a 'generational transmission of institutional dominance'. This means that the dominance that the previous generation has established over state power, education, administration, and resources is passed on to the new generation.

This is what sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theory of 'cultural capital' suggests. During the Rana and Panchayat periods, a few limited families and classes monopolised education, administration, and state resources. Even after democracy and republics came, the descendants of those same families and classes continued to control 'civil society', the media, and international non-governmental organisations. Maintained easy access and leadership in modern fields such as

As privilege is thus structurally passed down from one generation to the next, the voices of marginalised communities continue to struggle to come to the centre of academic and media discourse today.

From a subaltern perspective, the message given by the author of the Facebook post that “Nepal is not just a country of Bahuns and Chetis” seems to be an attempt to restore Nepal’s multi-ethnic, multilingual, and multicultural reality.

But from another perspective, rather than criticising Himal magazine solely on the basis of Rammani Acharya's family background, it is considered more academic and balanced to objectively assess the magazine's current editorial policy, outlook, and the extent to which it has given space to the issues of marginalised communities.

6. Conclusion

This research has exposed the deep internal colonial character of the linguistic and political structure of Nepali society. The banning of the word 'khulkyau' in the native Kirat dialect as obscene and the construction of the discourse of 'wild and uncivilised' indigenous people in Rammani Acharya Dixit's poetry are two sides of the same coin. It shows how the elite class controls the identity and self-esteem of Indigenous people through the misuse of language and power.

For the true decolonisation of the Nepali language and history, the following tasks seem indispensable:

1. Linguistic democratisation: The dictionary should be democratised by giving space to the vibrant, emotional, and supposedly taboo words of marginalised and indigenous communities in the mainstream Nepali language.

2. Rewriting history: Political changes, including those in 2007 BS, are considered the history of only the elites. It should be rewritten from a subaltern perspective.

3. Academic balance: An objective examination of the system of structures and ideologies the figure stands for should be applied while attacking any particular figure and not the personality.

Finally, it should only be by the revival of local knowledge, language, and history that the republic of Nepal, with the multicultural context, becomes conceptually and emotionally satisfying.

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Theme 3: Cultural Geopolitics and the "Bones and Skin" Metaphor

[9] The 'Bones and Skin' of the Nepali Language: A Decolonial Historical Rereading

Summary

Traditional historiography has considered the Khas-Nepali language to be a straightforward and linear corruption of Sanskrit. However, this interpretation seems incomplete when viewed from the perspective of linguistic archaeology. The present article proposes a 'biological metaphor of bones and skin' and argues that although the outer shell or vocabulary of the Nepali language (superstrate) appears to be Sanskrit in origin, its inner grammatical structure and working method (substrate) are rooted in the indigenous Himalayan and Bhot-Burmese (Kirat) civilisations. This article makes a decolonial attempt to establish the Nepali language not as a 'disorder of Sanskrit', but as 'an original hybrid invention of Himalayan civilisation'.

1. Introduction: The Spectacle of History and the Native Grounds

Can any living language be born from nothing? Certainly not. And nor is it one continuous stream from one source. Language is a historical record of people's journeys, associations, battles and lives, and it reflects all of them. But turn to our old history books; you have there one tale – that Nepali developed directly from the bosom of Sanskrit. From Sanskrit, it was Prakrit; from Prakrit, it degenerated, and then it developed into Nepali. How easy it sounds, how linear! But does history really follow such a simple line? It doesn't. It was just a linguistic web woven by the elite and ruling class to make their dominance appear 'ancient' and 'sacred'.

Around 1500 BC, when the Khas community entered the hilly geography of modern western Nepal and Kumaon-Garhwal, there was no void. That geography was already a geography with a dense and indigenous presence of Bhot-Burmese-speaking communities, like Kirat, Magar, Gurung, and Chepang. The migrating Khas could not be happy without communicating with the indigenous people there. They had to trade, farm, and exchange lives. In the course of these transactions, the Khas were forced to cover the bones of their primitive Indian grammar with the skin and fragrance of the local Himalayan languages. Therefore, the Nepali language is not only the daughter of Sanskrit; it is a hybrid child of this Himalayan civilisation.

2. Theoretical framework: the metaphor of bones and skin

It's not hard to understand. Imagine a living body. Language also has its own body. To make this clear, I propose a 'physical metaphor of linguistic levels':

Bone/Substrate: This is the inner structure of the language, which does not die or change easily. The structure of sentences, grammar, and sound system fall within this. This 'bone' of the Nepali language is not from Sanskrit but from our own soil and the foundation of the Bhot-Burmese language.

Blister (Skin/Superstrate): This is the outer shell. The lexicon falls into this. It is changeable. From the outside, there are many Sanskrit words in Nepali, so we are mistaken in considering it a form of Sanskrit. But the inner 'algorithm' that works on it is indigenous.

We hill people say 'protecting the mouth and nose'. This is the language of folk psychology. It has the scent of earth. But the elites called it obscene and replaced it with complicated Sanskrit words like 'maithuno ra achar'. The skin changed, but the bones did not.

3. Solid evidence of a Bhot-Burmese substrate

How deeply is the Bhot-Burmese influence embedded in the 'bones' of the Nepali language? Let's look at a few facts from the point of view of linguistics:

a) 'Vata' and 'Jana' between number and noun (Classifier System)

The connection between numbers and nouns in Indian languages is straightforward. In English, we say "two books", but in Hindi, "do kitaban". There is no need for a third word in between. But in Nepali, we do not say 'Dui kitab'; we say 'Dui vata kitab'. We do not say 'Tin manche'; we say 'Tin jana manche'. This strict rule of linking 'vata' and 'jana' is not Indian. This is a purely Bhot-Burmese language pattern. In Newari, it is called 'Ni-pu safu' (two books). Nepalis have retained this native bone.

b) Mandatory use of 'le' in the subject (Ergative Case)

We say, "I ate rice." Here, 'le' is attached after 'mai'. Linguist Tej Ratna Kansakar (1996) says Indian languages are generally 'subject-dominant'. Such use of 'le' is not mandatory in Sanskrit or Hindi. But in Nepali, 'le' is required as soon as a transitive verb appears. This is the 'ergative' character of the Bhot-Burmese language, where strong emphasis is placed on the 'agentivity' of the verb. The mechanism of action of 'nga-gi' in Tibetan and 'maale' in Nepali is the same.

Connecting with the subject in the Nepali language, 'le', the mystery of why the presence of the ergative marker is so distinctive and unique becomes clear when we compare it with parallel sentences in English, Sanskrit, and Hindi.

To confirm the establishment of linguist Tej Ratna Kansakar, let's look at a sentence that conveys the same meaning in the mirror of four different languages:

Comparative sentence study of four languages:

English (Indo-European / Subject-Dominant):

"I ate rice."

Analysis: Here 'I' is the subject. The form of the subject does not change at all in this sentence. Whether it is past tense or present tense (I eat rice), 'I' remains strong as it is. This is called Subject-Dominant. It is said.

संस्कृत (Classical Indo-Aryan / Nominative-Accusative):

“Aham annam akhadam.” (I ate the food).

Analysis: Here, 'Aham' means 'I' (subject). Even when a transitive verb comes in the past tense in Sanskrit, the subject remains in its original form (first inflexion). There is no need to add any additional grammatical 'loppa' or distinguishing mark behind it.

Hindi (Modern Indo-Aryan / Split-Ergative):

"मैंने भात खाया."

Analysis: Here, it seems that 'ne' (मैने) is hanging behind 'मैने', but it cannot control the verb. In Hindi, the verb leaves the subject and follows the gender of the action (भात). If 'भात' is replaced by 'रोटी' (feminine), then the sentence becomes "I ate bread". That is, even though there is 'ne' here, the 'agentivity' of the subject in the verb is not strong.

नेपाली (Himalayan Syncretic / Ergative-Agentive):

"मैले भात खाँ।"

Analysis: Here, although 'ne' is seen attached to 'mai' ('maine'), it cannot control the verb. In Hindi, the verb leaves the subject and follows the gender of the object ('bhaat'). If we replace 'bhaat' with 'roti' (feminine), the sentence becomes 'Maine roti khaai.' In other words, even though 'ne' is present here, the subject's 'abhikartatva' (agentivity) over the verb is not strong.

This comparison reveals 3 distinctive features of Nepali sentences:

1. Strict ergativity of transitive verbs: In Nepali, there is a strict rule that the past tense and transitive verbs (e.g., 'khanu', 'lekhnu', and 'hernu' or 'eat', 'write', and 'see') must be followed by the subject. Unlike English or Sanskrit, "Ma bhat khaye" is impossible to say; that would be grammatically incorrect. The ergative marker 'le' is required.

2. Supreme Agentivity: In Nepali sentences, verbs always respect the gender and masculine identity of the main person (Agent) doing the action. Regardless of the object, the subject's 'le' holds the central power of the sentence.

3. Tibeto-Burmese 'thought pattern': How did this 'ergative' rule, which is absent from English and Sanskrit of the Indo-European clan and incomplete in Hindi, become irrefutable in Nepali? Because it is the 'thinking mechanism' of the Tibetan and Kirat languages. In Tibetan too, there is a rule to give a special mark to the subject by saying 'नग-गी' (Nga-gi / माले) and in Newari, 'जि' (Ji-m / माले).

In short: The Nepali language may have borrowed words from Sanskrit or Indian roots (skin), but the rules (algorithms) of who rules whom within a sentence (bones) were learnt from the soil of the Himalayas and the Tibeto-Burman connection (bones). This is why Nepali sentence formation is considered a unique and proud hybrid invention in the world of linguistics.

c) Honourific System

In Sanskrit or Hindi, there are at most two or three levels of respect. But look at Nepali—'तं', 'तिमी', 'तपाईं', 'हजुर', and 'मौसुफ'. Where did so many levels come from? This hierarchical classification has been transferred from the sociolinguistic structure of Tibeto-Burmese and especially Newari and Tibetan.

d) Phonetic Echo (Reduplication)

When we speak in the village, we say, "Bhat-sat khayō, pani-sani piyiyo." The process of adding 'sat' or 'sani' to the end of this word to form 'echo' is not Indian. It is a characteristic of the Tibeto-Burmese and Munda languages, which have been mixed with the nasha-nasha of Khas Prakrit.

4. Comparative assessment of linguistic influence

Let's look at this table to further clarify the structure of the Nepali language:

Table 7: Influence of Tibeto-Burman languages on Nepali sentence structure

Speciality	Sanskrit (Sambranta Lepan)	Khas-Nepali (native bone)	Source of influence/trend
Inflectional usage	Rama's (Ramasya) (hidden within words)	Ram's ('To' (hanging separately))	Tibeto-Burmese Padayog (Agglutination)
Gender of inanimate objects	Inanimate objects also have gender (e.g., mej gir gai)	The pen fell (inanimate objects do not have gender).	Tibeto-Burmese influence (Gender-Neutral)
plural	Many suffixes	Behind the word 'Haru', adding	Native Khas and Kira influence

5. Decolonial conclusion

After 1250, the Khas kings of Nepal began to use Sanskrit words in their state documents to compare their prestige with the Hindu kings of the Gangetic plain. In linguistic terms, this is called 'Elite Overlay'. According to Chaulagain (2075), this was a political tool to give 'legitimacy' to the state.

From the outside, 80 per cent of the words in the Nepali language may appear to be from Sanskrit, but they are just the 'skin'. The grammatical 'bones' that the Nepali language uses to think, express, and see the world are the product of this Himalayan soil. Accepting this truth and Appreciating the indigenous foundation of the language is the real decolonisation of our linguistic history.

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[10] Inscriptions of the Sinja Empire and the existential revolution of 'Ho-Chha'

Summary

This article provides a linguistic analysis of 11th- to 14th-century inscriptions and copperplate inscriptions from the Sinja Valley of western Nepal. It provides evidence of how this ancient language, which Christian Tol (Tol, 2020) has termed 'Early Khas', was a fusion of Indo-European and Bhot-Burmese elements. In particular, it provides evidence of how the existential grammatical division of 'identity' and 'presence', which is not found in languages such as Sanskrit or Hindi but is found only in Nepali and Himalayan languages, was the result of indigenous social interaction.

1. Introduction: The stones of Sinja speak

History is not about kings and dates and wars. History is inscribed on stones; they can be removed by the tide. The inscriptions and copper plates of the Sinja Valley of western Nepal are such evidence. These records are the strongest evidence that reveals the genetic identity of the Nepali language.

Christian Tol (2020) has called these linguistic samples of the Sinja Empire 'Early Khas'. What does this mean? This means that this language was not a ready-made package that came from somewhere. It was a living and autonomous language that was evolving and changing in this soil, in the tongues of the people here. Sanskrit grammar is based on 'inflection' (inflectional), where all the meaning is hidden at the end of the word. But the language found in the Sinja inscriptions seems to be leaning towards an 'agglutinative' nature. This change would not have been possible without the deep contact of the Bhot-Burmese languages.

2. The existential revolution of 'ho', 'yes' and 'chha' has'

So come on, let's have a talk about something fantastic. We Nepalis, we use 'ho' and 'chha' cautiously, but do you know most of the Indo-European languages around the world don't have this binary system? In Sanskrit, Hindi or English, 'presence' and 'existence' are verbs using the same. But in Nepali, this division is clear. This is the biggest 'existentialist revolution' of the Nepali language, which was born from the linguistic fusion of Sinja.

To see its differences from a philosophical as well as a practical perspective.

'Ho' (Identity/Essence): It answers the question 'What is something that does not change?' The essence, the definition or the permanent character of an object.

"Yo dhunga ho." (Introduction to stone as a permanent entity)

'Has' (State/Presence): What its immediate status or location is; where it is, how it is, etc., which is bound to change.

Example: "Dhunga bhuima chha." (We are talking about the presence of the stone here, not its introduction.)

If the Nepali language were purely a daughter of Sanskrit, we would not have distinguished 'ho' and 'chha' in this way. Let's look at this comparative table to clarify this difference:

Table 8: Nepali's distinct 'ho' (identity) and 'chha' (existence) verbs

Language	Introduction (Identity)	Presence / Chha	Trends in linguistic structure
English	This is a stone.	The stone is there.	In both 'is' only (single arrangement)
Sanskrit	Ayam Prastar Asti.	Prastar tatra asti.	In both 'asti' only (single arrangement)
Hindi	Yaha patthar hai.	Patthar waha hai.	In both 'hai' only (single arrangement)
Newari	Kha	Du	Two different words (native Tibeto-Burmese)
Limbu	Ne / O	U / or Wa	Two different words (native Tibeto-Burmese)
Nepali	Yo dhunga ho.	Dhunga tyaha cha.	Clear division of 'yes' and 'yes' (hybrid bone)

In the Sinjalese Khas Empire, people adapted their Indian dialect to the 'thinking framework' of the indigenous languages (Kirati, Newari, etc.) of the region. As a result, although the 'skin' of the Nepali language appears Indian, its 'mechanism for understanding existence' (bones) became completely Himalayan and indigenous.

3. The truth revealed by records

An examination of ancient inscriptions from the Sinja Empire reveals some more original features of this 'Early Khas' language:

a) Damupal's inscription (1038 B.C.)

It is considered the oldest written example of the Nepali language. It contains identical words from Sanskrit, but the sentence structure and verb forms are completely 'special' in nature. The verbs do not follow the strict grammar of Sanskrit but are closer to the pronunciation of the common tongue.

b) Records of Ashoka Challa and Punya Malla

Let's look at the Kanakapatra of King Punya Malla, dated 1394 B.S. There, words like "paleko" or "hamro" are used. 'Ko' – the use of the genitive postposition is clear. In Sanskrit, to express the relationship, the form of the word 'Ram' has to be changed to make 'Ramasya'. But in Nepali, 'Rama' remains as it is, and 'ko' is added after it. This 'ko' is structurally similar to the 'ya' of Newari or the 'gi' of Tibetan.

According to Tol and Dnyaneshwar (2020), the use of intransitive and transitive verbs in these records clearly shows the Tibeto-Burmese ergative pattern and early forms of 'le'. This was a linguistic revolution that broke the rigid shackles of the Indian language and reached the common people.

4. Conclusion

The Sinja language, through corruption from Prakrit and migration eastward, took the form of modern Nepali. The rise of the Gorkha kingdom and subsequent political unification gave it a royal form, but its conception and infancy took place in the lap of the Sinja Himalayan civilisation itself.

What the archival evidence confirms is that the grammar of the Nepali language is not a legitimate descendant of the grammar of Sanskrit. Sanskrit has only lent it its vocabulary. Its procedures and use of auxiliary verbs are completely indigenous.

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[11] Decolonisation of the Nepali language: Displacement of indigenous words and the adoption of Sanskrit

Summary

The present article analyses from a decolonial perspective how indigenous (Jharra) words were replaced by Sanskrit equivalents in the historical development of the Nepali language. Although the original 'grammatical backbone' of the Khas language is based on Tibeto-Burmese and indigenous Himalayan civilisations, the 'Sanskritisation' that began in the Middle Ages has transformed its linguistic ecology. It discusses how this changed. The paper claims that the recovery of lost jargon is the true decolonisation, interpreting the overuse of slang, complicated word combinations, and the displacement of native images as "linguistic colonialism".

Keywords: Devanagari, jargon, indigenous bones, Sanskritisation, linguistic displacement, Mundhumi relics, and decolonisation.

1. Introduction: The conflict between language and power

Any language is not just a means of communication; it is also a political and cultural power. In the history of the Nepali language, when the Khas kings accepted the influence of the Brahmanical culture of the south as a form of royal prestige, a major 'surgical operation' was carried out on the language. In this process, the indigenous (Jharra) words that had been in the public tongue for thousands of years were declared 'impure' or 'rural' (Ganwar) and replaced with the harsh words of Sanskrit. This article will explore the pain of this displacement and the real bones of the language.

2. Rationale for the study

The Sanskritisation that took place in the Nepali language in the name of 'purity' has destroyed the indigenous knowledge system. (Indigenous Knowledge) And it tried to erase the images of Mundhumi philosophy from history. Today's generation, when they stop saying 'huthuti' and say 'abhilasha' or forget 'armal' and say 'jariwana', is not developing language but rather linguistic amnesia. This article attempts to reconnect those missing links.

3. Theoretical framework: 'Elite overlay' and decolonisation

This article builds on Mignolo's (2011) theoretical framework of 'colonial difference' and the 'synonymous movement', which places more importance on the internal structure (bones) of language than on its outer covering (skin).

4. Point-by-point presentation and analysis

4.1 'Bone' is a native language; 'skin' is a Sanskrit word: an analysis

The sentence structure and auxiliary verbs (ho, chha, thio) of the Nepali language are not derived from Sanskrit. They are the product of the Sinja Valley's indigenous and Tibeto-Burmese contacts. However, after the 12th century, the Khasa kings added Sanskrit to the language to appeal to the 'elite' class coming from the south.

Result: The grammatical structure (bones) remained the same, but the vocabulary (skin) was completely changed.

4.2 Vivid examples of the displacement of indigenous words

Some examples of how Sanskritisation has displaced our original jargon are shown in the table below:

Table 9: Examples of native word displacement

Native/Jarra word (bone)	Displacing the Sanskrit word (skin)	Nature of displacement
<i>Hutubuti</i>	<i>Abhilasha/Utkantha</i>	Momentum displacement
<i>Deu</i>	<i>Iswar/Paramatma</i>	Displacement of the Mundhumi image
<i>Armal</i>	<i>Jariwana/Danda</i>	Sanskritisation of the legal field
<i>Ot</i>	<i>Ashraya/Sharan</i>	Displacement of geographical proximity
<i>Bela</i>	<i>Samaya/Kaal</i>	The dominance of Sanskrit in daily life

Hundreds of such words, which were associated with the mundane and rustic life, were pushed to the corner of the dictionary as 'non-standard'.

4.3 The politics of collocation and word combinations

The excessive use of 'halanta' words (e.g., 'vidhwan' and 'mahan') and long-form word combinations (e.g., 'gariyeBamojim' and 'uperyuktaNusar') seen in Devanagari writing are actually a phenomenon of cutting the language off from the masses and making it elite.

The Nepali language is originally a vowel-ending (ajanta) language. However, when learning Sanskrit, it was made consonant-ending (halanta), which made it difficult for ordinary people to write in Nepali.

4.4 The existentialist roots of 'ho' and 'cha'

In Sanskrit, only 'Asti' works, but in Nepali, 'Ho' (identity) works, and 'Cha' (presence) is separate. This division is a result of Tibeto-Burmese (like Newari's 'kha' and 'du') contact. This confirms that no matter how many Sanskrit words are mixed, the Nepali way of thinking and understanding remains the same. But it is indigenous.

4.5 Devanagari and the digital challenge

The Devanagari script has become a strong script for the Nepali language, but even when it is used on computers, it is only 'standardised' in Unicode in the same format as Sanskrit. This makes it difficult to bring our native sounds and regional accents into the digital world.

Mundhum is not just a religious text; it is a profound 'linguistic philosophy'. The inner structure (bones) of the Khas-Nepali language stands in exactly the same philosophy as the Mundhumi worldview views the universe.

5. Fusion of Mundhumi Philosophy and Linguistic Structure: The Philosophical Basis of 'Haddi'

Mundhum interprets the relationship between nature, man, and the Supreme Being as an 'indivisible unity'. This philosophy has had three major effects on the grammar of the Nepali language, which the veneer of 'Sanskritisation' has not been able to cover:

5.1 Philosophical basis of 'Ho' and 'Cha': 'sameness' and 'existence'

In Mundhumi thought, any object has two aspects: one is its 'essence' (Samyet/Essence). And the other is its 'power' (Hang/Power or Presence).

- 'Ho' (Identity): It refers to the 'sameness' or identity of an object, which is unchangeable. (Ex: "This is a mundum.")
- 'Cha' State: It refers to the 'existence' or power of an object, which can change according to place and time. (Example: "Mundhum manama cha.")
- In Sanskrit, the inclusion of both of these in the same 'Asti' is an Indian monistic thought, but in Nepali, their separation is a linguistic reflection of Mundhumi dualism (essence vs. existence).

5.2 Agency of Nature: philosophical meaning of 'le' division

In Sanskrit and other Indian languages, 'nature' often comes as a passive object. But in the world, nature (air, water, trees, and stones) is itself an 'agent'.

- Example: "Hawale rukh dhalyo."
- Here, by adding the ergative marker 'le' to 'hawa' (nature), it is given the status of a conscious subject. In Indian languages, inanimate objects do not get the role of 'subject' in this way (for example, in Hindi, 'hawa se peed gira' is said, where the wind is only the medium). This 'le' inflexion of Nepali is actually the grammatical backbone of the Mundhumian 'nature-centred' philosophy.

5.3 Health and Emptiness: Aggregate Negation

In connection with the field of health psychology, Mundhum considers 'health' not simply the absence of disease but rather a 'balance'.

- Mundhumian expression: "*Masinen, Mabaknen*" (not dead, not spoilt).
- In Nepali, the use of double negatives such as 'namareko' and 'napakeko' conveys the philosophical sense of 'middle way' or 'balance'. This is a 'no-no' (neither-nor). The linguistic structure shows that truth does not lie solely in 'yes' or 'no' but also in between.

6. Decolonial Displacement: The Shadow of Sanskrit Against the Image of the Native

Here is a sobering comparison of how Sanskritisation displaced our philosophical images:

Table 10: Losses caused by displacement of native words

Indigenous/Native Image (Bone)	Sanskrit-displaced word (Skin)	Philosophical loss
<i>Armal</i>	<i>Jarivana/Danda</i>	'Armal' conveys the sense of 'balancing', while 'Danda' conveys suppression.
<i>Ot</i>	<i>Ashraya/Sharan</i>	Ot signifies the protection of nature, while Sharan signifies surrender.
<i>Sandh</i>	<i>Sima / Simana</i>	A 'sandh' is a social agreement; a 'simana' is a division.
<i>Thiti</i>	<i>Niyam/Vyavastha</i>	The situation of 'thiti' is organic and indigenous; the 'vyavastha' is 'imposed'.

6.1 The illusion of superiority and superiority

Sanskritisation made 'halanta' ङ a sign of scholarship in Nepali writing. But Mundhumian, Shruti, and Oral Tradition and each letter in them are living sounds. When we 'cut' the final 'n' with a halanta in 'vidwan', we stop the natural flow of that sound. In Mundhum, sound is never cut; it keeps resonating in the universe. Therefore, to say 'write' (ajanta) is to be close to the Mundhum rhythm, while to say 'lekhnus' (halanta in Nepali) is to worship the rules of Sanskrit.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of the decolonisation of the Nepali language isn't just to remove words but rather to recover its "mundhumian consciousness". Our 'bones' are in the Kirat-Mundhumi and Khas-Raithane civilisations, but our 'skin' is under the domination of Sanskrit. If we forget our jargon and grammatical peculiarities like 'ho/chha', we will cut off our 'philosophical roots'.

This 'skin and bones' recognition of the Nepali language will provide a new intellectual direction in the grand campaign of decolonisation of history.

Until we stop treating Sanskritised expressions as superior by saying "it is alive" and begin recognising native phrases like "it is not dead" as the real voice of Nepali, our language will never develop its own true backbone. Today's academic religion is to revive the imagery of the Mundhumian and Khas civilisations while still writing under the shadow of Devanagari.

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Theme 4: Resistance, Reform, and the Jharro Movement

[12] The Jharro Movement: The Theoretical Aspects of Khas Originality and Its Impact on the Development of the Nepali Language

Abstract

In this article, we examine the 2013 B.S. Born 'Jharrobadi Movement' and the influence of Sanskritisation, Hindiisation and the latest Englishisation on the native identity of Nepalis. Jharrobadi was the energetic protest movement against the linguistic colonialism on the Nepali language by the Nepali students who were living and studying in Banaras, India, and were Balkrishna Pokhrel, Koshraj Regmi, Ballabhamani Dahal and Taranath Sharma. This article observes how Jharrobadi made possible the restitution of the indigenous "khas" base of the Nepali language and made it closer to the vernacular by using qualitative methodologies and documentary analysis.

This article highlights the arguments for and against the movement and the increasing impact of Sanskrit, Hindi and English on Nepali. Today, the Khas language is included in the Karnali Province curriculum, making the Jharroist idea of keeping original terms more significant than ever. To conclude, it seems that the Jharroist movement is equally relevant now in terms of keeping the Nepali language in its purely acceptable form. It has liberated the Nepali language from undue other linguistic influences and made way for the establishment of its identity.

Keywords: Jharrobadi movement, Khas language, linguistic nationalism, originality, indigenous environment, Balkrishna Pokharel, Chudamani Regmi, new step, new word

1. Introduction

The Nepali language and the history of its origin and development have their history and origins very old and original. According to historical and linguistic evidence, its origin and roots are found in Sinja of the Karnali province of the Far West some thousand years back (Ekantipur, 2026). Although at the very initial stage the language was identified as 'Khas', 'Parvate' or 'Gorkhali' by various names, the language later got itself identified as 'Nepali' and the mother tongue and also achieved the status and pride of the national language. Although Nepali itself is a fully fledged linguistic system, it was found to be subjected to various external assaults and influences.

Linguistic transmission and identity crisis

In the Nepali language, particularly with the 'Sauraseni' influence of Sanskrit and at the advent of the modern age, the hegemony of the neighbouring Hindi language and the world language, English, became immense. As a result, the Nepali language was significantly affected regarding its pure morphology and vernacular vocabulary. Nepali students studying at places like Banaras within British India began to understand and misapprehend Nepali as a branch or regional variation of Hindi and wrote commentaries on it (Kantipur, 2075). Such linguistic Fascination towards the foreign had been a point of contention for the original status and separate existence of the Nepali language (Pokharel, 2021, as cited in Sahitya Sagar).

Jharroya movement and its activists

To do away with such linguistic slavishness and artifice, in 2013 B.S., the 'Jharrobadi Movement' originated from Varanasi, India. It was an epoch-making campaign to rid the Nepali language of the foreign 'Sanskrit' and 'Hindi' elements and reclaim it within its indigenous 'Khas' environment. This campaign abandoned the 'traditional dress' of imported vocabulary and chose the pure 'jharro' Nepali words.

According to literary critic Chudamani Regmi, the role of the distinguished scholars in propagating this language revolution has been prominent. Regmi had observed that it was indeed the protagonists like Balkrishna Pokharel, Koshraj Regmi, Ballabhamani Dahal and Taranath Sharma who had become chief proponents of this movement. Under the leadership of these stalwarts, the mission was accomplished by striving to eliminate the alienating complexities and making Nepali pure, clear and indigenous.

An attempt has been made in this article to unfold comprehensively and analytically what all four chief activists did to champion the cause of the Nepali language, the theoretical foundations of the Jharro movement and its historic role towards the modernisation of the language.

2. Justification

The pertinence of the study being undertaken has been identified from multiple angles in the pursuit of maintaining the standard structure of the Nepali language and its originality. During the historical days, the language tended to prioritise imported words of Hindi and Sanskrit in unnecessary terms, forgetting the native origin (specific milieu), thus impeding the naturalistic process of development of the language. The linguistic corruption and hollowness of words that scholars like Balkrishna Pokharel, Koshraj Regmi, Ballabhamani Dahal and Taranath Sharma realised 70 years back have emerged in the modern context in a different form of severity.

The needs and justifications for undertaking this study can be identified as:

a) Clashes between linguistic originality and external imposition:

In this global era, the scope of imposition on Nepalis does not just confine itself to Hindi; the English language is also emerging as an overwhelming element over Nepali. Because of the dominance of the foreign language, the true character of the Nepali language is facing an imminent crisis, and the spirit that fought against Hindi linguistic domination yesterday is also needed against the present day's 'Sanskritisation' of the language, and the clash can only be fought by analysing the Jharroya movement.

b) Efforts by language policy and the anguish of language users:

The Constitution of Nepal and the Language Commission have always been striving for standardisation of Nepali, but even at present, there lies deep pain and disquiet among sensitive language users and intellectuals regarding the question of 'short-long' and spelling. Therefore, it has been deemed useful to compare the foundational thoughts of the Jharrova movement and current language policies and address this issue.

c) Relevance of indigenous learning and the local curriculum:

The movement's key aspiration was to take Nepali back to its original 'Khas' roots, the outcome of which could be clearly seen when 3 municipalities of Karnali Province last year implemented the Khas

language as a local curriculum (Himal Press, 2025). This step has revived the dream of tracing the root of the Nepali language back to its origin and connecting it with the local identity through education.

d) Analysis of historic documents based on academic research:

These days, there is a possibility that the Jharrobadi movement may be merely reduced to the status of a historical phenomenon, but at the present juncture in time, it has become an academic obligation to analyse the concepts like 'sikka' (original Nepali word) and 'dhyak' (foreign word) presented by this movement from a modern linguistic perspective.

Hence, this study is determined to be worthwhile for understanding the legacy of the Nepali language, combating present-day linguistic ambiguity and developing a roadmap for the linguistic development of the future.

3. Theoretical framework

This study aims to examine the extent and impact of the Jharrobadi movement by mostly using linguistic nationalism, and these are based on the philosophy of the Zarro movement itself and language purism.

3.1 Linguistic nationalism

Linguistic nationalism considers language to be the core of national identity, apart from being the medium of communication. According to Anderson (1983), a nation is an "imaginary community"; indeed, the strongest bonds connecting people are print and shared language. Unlike the conventional theory where language cannot overcome political borders, the Jharroist movement takes language as a symbol of the native pride and self-respect of Nepali people; it encourages avoiding external linguistic encroachment and strengthening national thought with native words (Fishman, 1972). The principle of linguistic nationalism means that freeing the Nepali language from Hindi's dominion is freedom for the nation.

3.2 Language purism

Another conceptual tool of this paper is 'language purism'. Thomas (1991) describes it as 'a school of thought which regards certain forms of language (usually traditional or native) as more "pure" and desirable than others'. To promote a simpler Nepali free from undue Sanskrit 'tatsam' and Hindi 'aangantuk' words in favour of indigenous 'tadbhava' or 'jharro' words is the Jharro movement's effort in the domain of purism, a concept believing that language should be protected from 'corruption' (Thomas, 1991).

3.3 Standardisation and 'One Nation, One Language' concept

The concept of standardisation confirms the authority of language through conformity to a definite form. "Pure and simple Nepali", proposed by Jharroists, is, in essence, "One Nation, One Language". It is related to the principle where standardisation is believed to consolidate national identity. Balkrishna Pokharel and Taranath Sharma argued that only the simplest and easiest-to-understand language should be the standard; participation by users in the process would enable Nepali to be liberated from the traditional grammar and make it modern and effective.

From this framework, the Jharro movement can be clearly established as not merely a linguistic manipulation but an 'intellectual rebellion' of national linguistics and colonial thinking.

4. Methods

This research is both descriptive and analytical in nature and has applied the qualitative research method predominantly. To determine the historical background, theoretical basis and significance of the Jharro movement, the following procedures of the research have been adopted:

4.1 Research design and source

The present study has used document analysis and literature review as the principal research design. The required materials have been collected through primary and secondary sources.

Primary Source: Original writings, articles, and manifestos by pioneers of the Jharro movement (Balkrishna Pokharel, Koshraj Regmi, Ballabhamani Dahal, and Taranath Sharma).

Secondary Source: Information/references have been extracted from books on linguistics, domestic and international journal articles, research papers from different universities, websites and e-newspapers (e.g., Himalpress, 2025; Ekantipur, 2026).

4.2 Material collection and analysis

The works of renowned linguists and researchers have been relied upon in the process of research for corroboration as well as comparative study. In particular, a deep understanding and similar spirit found in Subba's (2026) cultural and public health-oriented articles, as well as linguistic analysis presented by Khanal (2023), lend more academic vigour to this study (Subba, 2026; Khanal, 2023).

Additionally, the process of data collection has been complemented with triangulation by accessing different websites, news portals and academic blogs. The various information gathered has been subjected to thematic analysis. The impacts of the Jharrobadi movement have been analysed in terms of its methodologies.

4.3 Limitations of the study

The scope of this research is confined to analysing historical documents available so far. Primarily, an attempt has been made to examine its role in standardising the Nepali language while exploring both its theoretical and practical aspects.

5. Presentation and analysis

1) What was it? Who was in it?

Although Balkrishna Pokharel and Ballabhamani Dahal are considered the central figures of the Jharroist movement, this movement was not limited to the single efforts of these three. According to Chudamani Regmi, Pokharel was the first in the leadership of the movement, Koshraj Regmi was the second, Ballabhamani Dahal was the third, and Taranath Sharma, who was associated with the later period of the linguistic movement, was the fourth. The contribution of the main activists is presented in a point-by-point manner below.

Balkrishna Pokharel: The ideological pioneer of the movement

Balkrishna Pokharel (1990-2075) is the original promoter and theoretical leader of this movement (Sahitya Sagar, 2021; Subba, 2022). He was the first to present the concept of "Jharro Nepali", i.e., an original Nepali untouched by Hindi or Sanskrit. In the capacity of editor-in-chief of the magazine 'NaULO

Pailo', he was the intellectual head of the movement (Sahitya Sagar, 2021). After completion of a master's degree in comparative linguistics, he penned a book, 'Nepali Bhasha Ra Sahitya', which was honoured with the Madan Puraskar in B.S. 2021 (Wikipedia, 2025; Pokharel, 2021). In Banaras, where he was studying, his self-esteem was hurt when his friends speaking Hindi branded the Nepali language as Hindi, and this served as the primary reason behind the linguistic crusade (Sahitya Sagar, 2021; Subba, 2022). Pokharel, who was a supporter of the national opinion that the Nepali language is not the sister language of Hindi, laid the foundation of this movement theoretically (Regmi, 2079).

Ballabhamani Dahal: A skilled user of theory

Ballabhamani Dahal (born 1993) is the third important leader of the 'Jharrobadi Movement', which was started with the aim of making the Nepali language pure and original. He is a distinguished figure who is simultaneously active in Nepali linguistics, literature, journalism and the academic (university) sector.

Dahal is among the main activists who put the principles of the Jharrobadi Movement into practical use, not just in rhetoric. He gave the movement a concrete form by applying the principles of this movement to his own writings, book editing and in-depth research.

The following key points can be seen to understand his linguistic contribution:

Leadership of 'Naulo Paylo': He played a very active and leading role in editing and running the magazine 'Naulo Paylo', which was the main mouthpiece (magazine) of the Jharro movement.

International Academic Debate: He wrote important research works on the phonetic and structural aspects of the Nepali language, adopting Western-style modern linguistics. His research work opened the door for introducing and debating the grammar and structure of the Nepali language to the international academic world.

Other key actors and their roles

Along with Balkrishna Pokharel and Ballabhamani Dahal, other activists also contributed significantly. Taranath Sharma (Tana Sharma) is the fourth major leader of the movement. He is known as the user of the concept of chauvinism in practice (Sharma, 2021; Wikipedia, 2025). He succeeded in making the Nepali language the focus of scientific study by completing an MA in English literature and a PhD in linguistics (Wikipedia, 2025). His famous travel essay 'Belaitira Baralinda' won the Madan Puraskar (Sharma, 2021; Ratopati, 2079).

Koshraj Regmi led the organisation as the general secretary of the 'Jana Sanskritik Sabha' (which launched 'Naulo Pailo') (Wikipedia, 2025). Chudamani Regmi contributed especially to the fields of Jharro dictionary and grammar (Regmi, 2021; Janmat Sahitya, 2022). He is known to have made great contributions to the Nepali language and literature as a supporter of the Jharro dialect (Janmat Sahitya, 2022). All these activists collectively provided the literary, linguistic and organisational edge to the movement.

Challenges, controversies and current relevance

This movement also faced the problem of internal differences. In the later stages, differences between activists increased, due to which the movement gradually weakened. In particular, there was a

competition between Balkrishna Pokharel and Taranath Sharma to decide who was the greatest writer (Subba, 2022). Such competition was prevalent in creative writing as well as language:

Despite all these activities, the collective struggles and activism of all these activist leaders helped the Nepali language establish itself as a basic and independent national language (Sharma, 2021; Regmi, 2021). It still serves as an inspiration today, and local municipalities in Karnali have sustained the movement by introducing a Khas Bhasha curriculum (Himal Press, 2025; Nagarik Samachar, 2025).

The origin of the Jharrobadi movement was a linguistically conscious movement. Students of Nepal, who went to study in Banaras, started studying Nepali through the self-learning method. While learning in Banaras, students, by coming under the influence of the Hindi language, presented it as an ideal movement to break the tradition of calling the Nepali language 'Hill Hindi'. (Sahitya Sagar, 2021)

The magazine 'NaULO Pailo' was the organ of this movement; its chief editor, Mr Balkrishna Pokharel, is considered the initiator of this movement. This movement started its beginning in 2012 B.S. And it reached its peak in 2013 B.S. The word 'Jharro' in this context is used in its native, local, nude, and crude (basic) meaning. This was not merely a linguistic uprising but also a fight against a distorted form of classical literature and a democratic call that 'literature is the drink for everyone' (Ratopati, 2077).

2) Why was this language campaign launched?

There were three main reasons for launching this movement:

a) Identity crisis: Those who returned from Banaras were enveloped in Hindi and considered their mother tongue to be synonymous with Hindi. Balkrishna Pokharel, in particular, once, in a language class, when Indian friends called the Nepali language Hindi, it deeply hurt him (Sahitya Sagar, 2021).

b) Excessive influence of Sanskrit and Hindi: The use of identical and semi-identical words in Nepali writing was increasing, which increased the distance from the rural audience.

c) The search for a pure Nepali: The activists felt the need for a purification of the Nepali language where the use of the popular and common words would increase (Sharbaraj Acharya, 2016; Kantipur, 2075).

The original idea of the activists was not to ban foreign words (Hindi, English, and Sanskrit) but to use Nepali native words, primarily words of Khas origin, wherever possible. In the words of Taranath Sharma, "What foreign words are written in Hindi should not be written in Nepali" (Kantipur, 2022).

3) Impact of the movement (initial, mid-term and long-term)

This movement has left a positive mark on the development of the Nepali language:

The recognition of original dictionary creation increased. This movement remained active in the direction of preventing the use of vulgar words, the creation of new words, excessive culturalisation, and the excessive use of English (Ratopati, 2023).

Writers like Chudamani Regmi, Koshraj Regmi, and Ballabhamani Dahal advanced literary writing by prioritising Nepali word choice. (Sahitya Sagar, 2021).

The 'people' came back to the centre of the literary field. This broke the monopoly of the elite class on literature.

But initially it took on a somewhat radical form, leading to clashes with archaic linguists. In some respects, the movement became "unruly".

4) Current situation and revival

Although the Jharro movement is not at its former peak, its influence remains. Recently, the elected officials have done significant work to revive the Khas language in Karnali Province. Mainly:

Khas language curriculum: Some local municipalities in Karnali Province (e.g., Sinja, Gurase, and Chankheli) have implemented a Khas language curriculum in schools (Ratopati, 2025). The government itself has announced a campaign to develop a curriculum at the local level and teach the Khas language (Himalpress, 2025).

Khas Dictionary Publication: After 17 years of hard work, Ramananda Acharya has published a Khas dictionary named 'Khasiya Aakhar', which includes 40,000 words (Kantipur, 2025).

Government recognition: The Government of Nepal has also recognised this language and has expressed commitment to its development (Himal Press, 2025).

In this way, the spirit of the Zarrova movement is still alive today.

5) The opinions of supporters and opponents

Support and opposition to this movement remained highly controversial.

The main supporters were Balkrishna Pokharel, Chudamani Regmi, Taranath Sharma (Tanasharma), Ballabhamani Dahal, and Koshraj Regmi. They argued that the tendency to consider the Nepali language as a dialect of Hindi should end, and it should be given complete originality. Literature should be connected to the language of the people's daily lives, not just the books of scholars (Ratopati, 2024). Taranath Sharma said in his interview, "I do not have the slave tendency to mix English when speaking Nepali" (Ratopati, 2019). The sense of inferiority that Balkrishna Pokharel experienced while studying in India was the main inspiration for this movement (Sahitya Sagar, 2021).

The opponents were mostly traditional scholars who had grown up under the influence of Sanskrit and Hindi. Their main argument was, "Just because we say Jharroism does not mean we should abandon Sanskrit" (Regmi, Ratopati, 2024). According to them, Sanskrit and Hindi have enriched the Nepali language, and their complete rejection would be suicidal for the language sector. This view also received some reaction, because Sanskrit has made a great contribution to the grammatical and lexical development of the Nepali language. But the goal of the supporters was to stop the blind imitation of foreigners.

6) Agreement and disagreement

This movement is a very important milestone in the history of the Nepali language. When you listen to its original voice, it seems like the culmination of national pride and cultural resistance. However, it has sometimes taken an extreme form and has been criticised for raising its voice for a complete rejection of a rich repository like Sanskrit. Since the development of a language in practical use comes from all sources, the search for the "perfect word" is sometimes impractical.

On the other hand, in today's context, this movement seems relevant even in a time when English is dominant. Considering the current era of Westernisation and the influence of the Hindi medium, the message that the Jharroist ideology must protect linguistic identity is becoming even stronger.

6. Conclusion

The Jharro Movement has proven to be a milestone in the history of the Nepali language. Although the beginning of this movement seemed somewhat radical, it removed the shame of the inferiority

complex of the Nepali language and showed pride in its nationality. It left an impression on the public that the Nepali language is not just a branch or a distorted form of Hindi but a completely independent, rich and original language.

Currently, due to the increasing pressure of English, Sanskrit, and Hindi, the relevance of this movement has become more relevant than a question. The success of the Khas language curriculum in Karnali Province, the publication of textbooks there, and the publication of dictionaries like 'Khasiya Aakhar' have touched the consciousness of this movement even in today's generation. Finally, the sustainable development of the Nepali language is possible only by making the policy of using the native language put forward by the Jharrobadi movement flexible.

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[13] The Geopolitics of Devanagari Script, the Politics of Printing, and Mundhumi Relics

Summary

This article critically examines the arrival of the Devanagari script in Nepal, its political-administrative establishment, and the challenges it faces in the current digital age. The use of Devanagari was not only a religious commitment but also a geopolitical strategy for the mediaeval Khas kingdom's economic relations with the North Indian market and diplomatic facilitation. In addition, the article logically dissects how the double negative and placeholder suffixes found in Kirat Mundhum and the native languages survive in today's Nepali vernacular despite the printing standardisation of Devanagari and how current digital algorithms are imposing a new 'Roman colonialism' on Devanagari.

1. Introduction: A script is not just letters

It is power. What is a script? Just the structure of letters? Absolutely not. A script has its own politics, its own empire. Rulers and authorities always use scripts as a powerful weapon to establish their dominance, standardise administration, and monopolise the market. In ancient times, scripts like 'Kutila' or 'Siddhamatrika' were used in the Khas Empire (Vajracharya, 2015). However, after the 10th century, the dominance and market of Devanagari in North India increased rapidly. Devanagari became a 'common market medium' for diplomatic and trade relations with the hill kingdoms of Nepal, Garhwal and Kumaon. It was formally adopted from the time of kings Ashoka Challa and Prithvi Challa in the 12th century. This choice was not just a religious attraction; it was a deliberate one. Administrative and geopolitical decisions. However, it gradually marginalised local indigenous scripts and verbal symbols.

2. The Politics of Printing and the Murder of Sound

During the manuscript period (13th to 18th centuries), the Devanagari script was very flexible and artistic. There were many handwriting styles, such as Bhujimol and Hingochi (Pandey, 2017). But when Nepali books started being printed from Banaras in the 19th century, the real 'standardisation' of the script began.

When Bhanubhakta's Ramayana (1891) and Motiram Bhatta's manuscripts were printed in the Banaras printing house, the North Indian Devanagari type was the most accessible and affordable medium (Rijal, 2066).

But there is a dark side to this printing standardisation—it has permanently erased some of the indigenous and original sounds of the Nepali language. End of voiceless and voiced vowels: The direct typing of Devanagari could not capture the distinctive throat and tongue-twisting sounds found in rural Western Nepali or Himalayan dialects.

Simplification of nasalisation: Many words in Nepali are nasal, but the script limited it to just one " (moon dot), which killed off the true diversity of pronunciation.

3. Mundhum and Kirati remnants in linguistic structure

No matter how much the Devanagari script and the aristocratic gloss have suppressed the external appearance of the language, the remnants of Kirat Mundhum and the indigenous civilisation are still strongly alive in our daily speech. Mundhum is not just a religious ritual; it is a compilation of the worldview and grammar of the Himalayan civilisation. Let us look at some concrete examples of this:

a) Use of Double Negative

In Indian languages, positive adjectives are used directly to describe a positive situation. In Hindi, it is said, 'Ped hara hara hai'. But in Nepali and Kirat languages, there is a unique way of describing a 'positive' situation through negatives. In Mundhum (Limbu): "Sing-ngin mesinen, mebaknen" (the tree is alive). Its literal meaning is "the tree is not dead; the fruit is not ripe," but the real meaning is "the tree is alive and green." Impact on Nepali: We easily say, "Rukh namareko chha" and "Phal napakeko chha". According to Dahal (2015), this is a direct influence of the Eastern Himalayan Tibeto-Burmese languages, where a profound truth is expressed by combining two negatives.

b) Inheritance of the locative suffix "-a"

In Limbu and other Kirati languages, the locative suffix "-a" is added to the end of a word to indicate location. For example, 'him' (home) becomes 'himme' (in the house). Although the 'maa' declension is used in standard Nepali, in our rural regional dialects, we still say, "U parai basyo" and "hami ta gharai chhau". This usage is closer to the Kirati "-a" than to the Sanskrit Saptami bibhakti.

4. Digital Colonialism and the Crisis of 2026

In today's digital age, Devanagari is experiencing a new and invisible colonialism. Computers and Unicode were developed by Western companies. They gave Devanagari a place, but that 'place' was also Western Roman-algorithm-based.

According to Adhikari (2021), when we type Devanagari compound letters (such as 'kra', 'gra', 'hva'), the software uses the concept of 'half-consonant' in Roman. The unique consonants found in old manuscripts of Western Nepali (such as 'lwe' and 'hva') do not map correctly to Unicode. This has created a major obstacle to the digital archiving of our ancient manuscripts that carry our history and knowledge. We write Devanagari, but behind the scenes, Roman is ruling.

5. Conclusion

The revival of 'Mundhumism' in contemporary Nepal has given rise to a new debate on language and script. If we truly want to decolonise history, then it is the academic dharma of today to explore the indigenous identities, indigenous scripts (such as Sirijanga) and original sounds that it suppressed while preserving the Devanagari script. The script should not be an instrument of power and monopoly but rather should be allowed to become a medium of equal communication for all languages.

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[14] Social participation and obstacles in the implementation of language policy at the local level

Abstract

Nepal's federal structure has granted the local level the autonomous right to formulate and implement language policies. This article analyses the implementation of language policies at the local level, the social participation in it, and the obstacles encountered. Despite the rights granted by Article 7 of the Constitution and the provisions of the Local Government Operation Act, 2074, the use of the mother tongue at the practical level has been challenging. This study, based on a qualitative methodology, has identified administrative, economic, social, and educational obstacles to the implementation of language policies at the local level as the main problems. The study shows that local languages have been neglected due to a lack of linguistic competence in the bureaucracy, a low budget, and the fascination with English among parents. Through a case study of the Limbu language in eastern Nepal, this article concludes that a policy without the participation of the local community will fail and presents solutions such as the establishment of 'language units', the provision or development of multilingual teachers, and the use of technology. Ultimately, since linguistic justice is the basis of social inclusion, it seems that local levels should consider language as an integral part of development.

Keywords: Language policy, local level, social participation, multilingual education, linguistic rights, federalism of Nepal.

1. Introduction

Nepal is a multilingual and multicultural country, with more than 124 languages in existence according to the 2078 census (Government of Nepal, 2021). Historically, Nepal has long adopted a unitary policy of "one nation, one language", which has led to the extinction of many local languages (Yadav, 2014). The 2072 constitution declared Nepal a multilingual nation and has given local levels the right to protect and use languages within their territories in government affairs (Government of Nepal, 2015). However, there is a huge gap between policy provisions and the ground reality of implementation. Local levels are facing various administrative, economic and social obstacles when trying to implement language policy (Gautam, 2075). Language is not only a means of communication but also a repository of identity and knowledge. Therefore, the successful implementation of the current federalism needs to investigate how language policy is being implemented at the local level and what kind of citizen participation is involved in it.

Article 6 of the Constitution clearly states that 'all mother tongues spoken in Nepal are the languages of the nation', while Article 7 makes provisions regarding the language of official business. However, having a constitutional and legal provision and its practical implementation are two different things. The long-standing unitary policy of "one nation, one language" in Nepal has marginalised languages other than Nepali. With the implementation of federalism, local levels (rural and municipal) have been given the authority to determine and implement language policies within their respective areas. However, there is a huge gap between the policies formulated at the centre and the ground realities at the local level.

The main objective of this article is to analyse the administrative, economic, social, and educational obstacles that have emerged during the implementation of language policy at the local level. It also discusses the role of social participation and possible solutions.

2. Rationale and problem definition of the article: background, gaps and contributions

By going through various past studies on the implementation and challenges of language policy in Nepal, some academically significant articles are identified in this area. Specifically regarding constitution and policy analysis, Yogi (2075) and Sonar (2078) have provided descriptions of the progressive nature of the Constitution of Nepal 2072 and the National Education Policy 2076. Likewise, regarding linguistic inclusion through placing language in the context of identity and social justice, the contributions made by Gautam (2075) and Tuladhar (2078) are considered. Besides, the issues of multilingual education in the educational domain have been specifically taken up in the studies of Aathpahi (2077) and UNESCO (2016).

However, upon careful inspection of all these past research studies, a research 'gap' can be identified. The majority of the studies conducted either primarily focus on the centre of policymaking or take only a part of the education system (i.e., within the classroom context of schools). There is inadequate research about the analysis of the role of local government (village and municipality) as a whole unit of administration, resource management and a hub of social participation under the system of federalism.

Considering this research gap, the research problem for this article has been formulated as follows:

"The inclusive language policy of federal Nepal, which is constitutionally guaranteed, is not being properly implemented at the local level, and it is mainly because of the interrelationship among the constraints that are found in the fields of administration, finances, participation and education, which is not adequately studied from a solution-oriented perspective."

This research proposes specific contributions and relevance by taking into account the following:

Local governance framework; bringing language policy as a subject beyond academics and as a part of local governance in service delivery and planning.

Interconnectedness of the constraints; putting forward how administrative, economic and social constraints are linked.

Centrality of participation: providing solutions to demonstrate how participation works as a core of implementation, not only as a policy objective.

Hence, this research seeks to contribute to the establishment of a new theoretical and practical framework, bringing the field of linguistic discourse from the level of the centre and classroom into local government and social participation.

3. Theoretical framework

Three major theoretical perspectives could be used to examine local language policy:

3.1 Principle of Linguistic Rights

Linguistic rights are part of human rights. In the view of Skutnab-Kangas (2000), everybody has a right to education, services, and identity in the mother tongue. In the Nepalese context, it is a fundamental right of people provided by the Constitution.

3.2 Inclusion and Pluralism

Linguistic inclusion is not about the existence of the majority language, but it is also the integration of linguistic minority groups, who are in the minority in number, into the nation-state. Involving the linguistic minorities in local-level decision-making processes can only be defined as real democracy.

3.3 Principles of multilingual education

Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) is the need of the time. When the child gets an initial education in his mother tongue, his intellectual growth tends to accelerate. As a result, it contributes to children's learning achievement and also prepares them for subsequent learning of national and international languages (UNESCO, 2003).

4. Study method

The study has adopted a qualitative research methodology that has critically examined the secondary data, i.e., documents and current practice. (Cresswell and Poth, 2018).

Collection of data: In order to find solutions, the Constitution of Nepal, the Local Government Operations Act 2074, the annual reports of the Language Commission, and the resources of UNESCO (2003) on multilingual education have been examined as international benchmarks.

Case study methodology: The Limbu language practised in eastern Nepal is the case study that connects the abstract concept with the real world. (Tuladhar, 2078).

Analytical framework: Linguistic rights and inclusion were the main framework for the interpretation of data through thematic analysis. (Skutnyav-Kangas, 2000).

5. Historical development of Nepal's language policy

The language policy of Nepal can be studied under three stages of history (Yadav, 2014):

5.1 Unification and Unity Period (18th century-2046)

After the geographical unification under the command of Prithvi Narayan Shah, the policy of 'one language, one guise' became a priority. Especially during the Rana period and the Panchayat system, the Nepali language was established as the sole language of the state and education. As a result, other local languages were marginalised, and some are on the verge of extinction.

5.2 Democratic Restoration and Transition Period (2047-2071)

In the 2047 constitution, Nepal was designated as a multilingual nation, and the Nepali language was still designated as the "language of government work". In the 2063 interim constitution, the language policies seem to open the way to local-level usage of mother tongues, but they failed to make effective implementation due to the absence of clear legislation.

5.3 Federal Democratic Republic (2072-present)

The current constitution holds revolutionary language provisions. There is a provision for designating one or more other languages as the language of official business, besides Nepali, by states in consultation with the majority of people speaking it within the state, as provided in state laws. The Local Government Operation Act 2074 BS, too, grants local-level rights of language protection and promotion.

6. Significant Barriers of Implementation at the Local Level

The attempt to implement language policy at the local level, despite its positive provisions, has failed due to various challenges:

6.1 Administrative and Structural Barriers

The existing structure of Nepal and its administration cannot get rid of its unitary thinking yet. Employees deployed at the local level are generally outsiders and don't know the local language and culture.

Lack of language skills: A communication gap between the senior citizens who come to the office for services and a non-Nepali-speaking employee can be identified.

Absence of a distinct department: Many of the municipalities don't have a separate department and a focal person for language and culture issues.

6.2 Financial and Resource Barriers

Money is required to execute the policy. **Costs of Translation and Publication:** The expenditure required to translate and print the official documents, forms, and notices of the government offices into local languages costs a lot.

Lack of digital infrastructure: Many local languages have their own script but don't have fonts/software that enable one to use their languages in computer applications.

6.3 Social-cultural and psychological barriers

There is a sort of hierarchy among languages in Nepali society.

Psychological inferiority: The Nepali language is regarded as the "civilised language" and the "language of jobs", and local languages are only "home languages"; thus, the language used by the younger generation is neither Nepali nor a local language.

Parental pressure: Parents of every child demand the English education of their child, making the promotion of mother tongue education an obstacle.

6.4 Educational barriers

Multilingual education is the most discussed concept, but it is the most formidable one to implement.

Absence of trained personnel: Learning has failed to occur because the teachers knew the local language but not the pedagogical methods, or they could teach but didn't know the local language.

Lack of textbooks: The textbook produced by the Curriculum Development Centre does not hold for all languages.

Table 11: Assessment of the Linguistic Situation at the Local Level

Indicators	Condition (approx)	Major Challenges
Schools with mother-tongue education	15-20%	Inadequate teachers and textbooks
Notice and website in local languages	5-10%	Lack of technicians and digital fonts
Admin staff who know local languages	30-40%	Lack of training and frequent transfer of staff
Budget allocation for mother language preservation	2-5%	Priority for infrastructure, not for language promotion.

Source: Nepal Language Commission, 2080; Gautam, 2075

7. Case Study: Use of the Limbu Language in Eastern Nepal

A large minority indigenous group from eastern Nepal, the Limbu (Yakthung), also possess their own indigenous 'Mundhum' philosophy and 'Sirjunga' script. Analysis of a sample rural municipality in Taplejung has revealed that while over 70 per cent of the people speak Limbu, government offices use this language very little. A policy was implemented by this rural municipality to promote Limbu as a second language in government jobs, but this process was not undertaken in "linguistic harmony". While on one side, the employees of the rural municipality were unfamiliar with the Limbu language, on the other side, people from other communities expressed objection to the policy, as they feared discrimination. The results indicate that language policy must also include all groups, rather than just one community.

8. Lessons learned from global experiences

How the other multilingual countries in the world have tackled this problem can be instructive for Nepal:

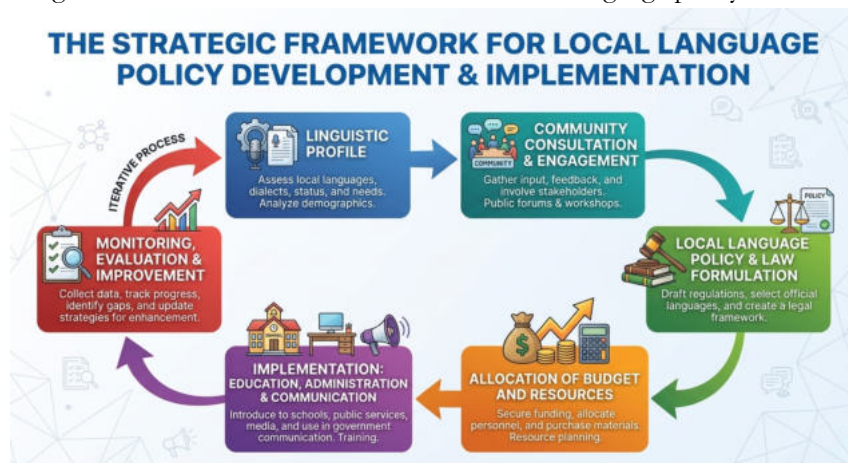
- **The "Tribhasha Sutra" of India:** India tried to integrate the mother tongue, Hindi and English into the education system. Despite the difficulties that came along, the educational space has been created for the promotion of indigenous languages.

- **South Africa:** Following the collapse of apartheid, 11 languages of South Africa were recognised as national languages. Through the "Pan South African Language Board", equal promotion of languages is being monitored.

- **Canada:** Balancing English and French, the "Official Languages Act" through which citizens are guaranteed the right to obtain service in their preferred language.

9. Proposed roadmap and recommendations for solutions

The following actions could be considered for a successful language policy at the local level:



9.1 Institutional and legal reform

Each municipality and rural municipality should have its own 'linguistic profile'. The place of service delivery would be based on statistics as to which language has dominance in a ward. A local language act must be prepared after consulting with the language commission.

9.2 Technology and materials development focus

We need to focus on developing appropriate technology. Localities must allocate resources for the development of a local script based on Unicode, language learning tools through mobile applications, creation of online dictionaries, etc.

9.3 Social mobilisation and advocacy

Language policy can't be solely decided by the people within an organisation. Local women's groups, youth clubs, and cultural institutions must be included. Campaigns like "My Language, My Pride" should be launched to overcome the linguistic inferiority complex.

9.4 Teacher management and school reform

Local communities can appoint local language experts as volunteer teachers in schools. In order to promote a multilingual school environment, the local language should be incorporated in notice boards, morning prayers, and other school activities.

10. Conclusion

Respecting linguistic diversity is a cornerstone for inclusive democracy as envisaged in the Constitution of Nepal. Obstacles faced by the local governments in implementing language policy should not be regarded as merely a technical issue but must be looked at from a human rights and social justice perspective. Language is the custodian of culture, not just a medium of expression. The identity of Nepal would be preserved only if languages were preserved at the local level. This necessitates political will, administrative readiness and broad social participation. The path of language is the path to an inclusive Nepal.

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Theme 5: Oral Traditions and Comparative Poetics

[15] The Pluralistic Reality of the Nepali Language: Indigenous Linguistic Contributions, Acculturation, and the Controversy of Language Policy

Summary

Institutions such as Pragya Pratishthan have been campaigning for a "standardised language", neglecting Nepal's multilingual and multi-ethnic contexts, which could reduce the worth of indigenous languages by promoting a Sanskrit-based Nepali language. This research proposes a pluralistic model of the Nepali language through comparison of aspects such as inclusivity, the usage of indigenous vocabulary and language policy for other nations.

The linguistic situation in Nepal is a good case study of complex multilingualism and ethnic diversity. Yet, the attempt of institutions like Pragya Pratishthan to replace words from the vocabulary of various indigenous languages with that of a "pure Nepali" language has served as the most important hurdle in promoting linguistic inclusion. This research covers three basic angles:

1. A historical fact: The emergence of the Nepali language was born out of Khas, Adivasi and Sanskrit elements.
 2. A contemporary controversy: Sanskrit-based language policy bypasses the indigenous languages.
 3. A possible solution: Study how such a policy is adopted in nations like India and South Africa.
- It focuses on a comparison to the natural flow of a language and the role of cultural justice as well as language rights.

Keywords: linguistic pluralism, tribal languages, Sanskritisation, language policy, history of the Nepali language

1. Introduction

(a) Politics of language

Nepal is a multilingual and multicultural country. According to UNESCO (2021), Nepal has 129 registered languages, the majority of which are deeply rooted in indigenous, tribal, and local populations. However, only "Nepali" is recognised as a Rajbhasha (official language) under the Nepalese constitution and practice. The Constitution of Nepal has directly or indirectly affected the survival of other languages.

Language is not only a medium for communication but also the vehicle for carrying social identity, cultural heritage, and historical consciousness. As for forcing one language onto a multilingual country, this could not only be a standardisation of the way people communicate but also a cultural hegemony. The ongoing "purification" campaign in the Nepali language is an example of this. The Nepal Pragya Pratishthan (which is responsible for the propagation of the Nepali language) is attempting to ban words from indigenous languages, prevent the use of English words and promote Sanskrit-based mannerisms. These developments are not to achieve linguistic inclusion but linguistic imperialism. (Linguistic Imperialism) Shows who (Phillipson, 1992).

So should Nepali be a pure or inclusive language? The issue does not just concern linguistics but politics, ethnicity and culture. In the first place the indigenous people of Nepal have been contributing words, grammar, and images of their own mothers to the Nepali language. Therefore, the Nepali language itself is a composite structure made up of contributions from indigenous languages. However, the concept of a "pure Nepali" denies that contribution.

The concept of language purification is controversial in contemporary linguistics. The development process of languages is related to historical, political, social and economic factors. (Fishman, 1991) Examples of multilingual countries that have generally adopted inclusive language policies—India’s recognition of 22 languages in its constitution or South Africa’s policy of 11 national languages—can be instructive for us. These countries have promoted linguistic identity and social justice simultaneously.

This research article aims to reanalyse the current linguistic debate in Nepal from a pluralist perspective. The article focuses on three main points: (1) the contribution of indigenous languages to the historical development of the Nepali language, (2) the social impact of the current linguistic purification campaign, and (3) alternative multilingual policy models. Through this, the article seeks to present a theoretical and practical perspective on what language policy should be in a multilingual, multicultural society.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Theoretical basis

The conceptual structure of this study is built on three essential principles:

2.1.1 Linguistic Pluralism. - Fishman (1972). The Language Planning Theory of

- UNESCO (2003) The idea of multilingual education

- Provisions relating to linguistic rights in Nepal's Constitution 2072

2.1.2 Linguistic Imperialism.

- Phillipson (1992). The language dominance theory

- Sanskritisation process (Srinivas, 1952).

2.1.3 Linguistic Justice

– Kymlicka (1995) The multicultural citizenship principle

- Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) The linguistic human rights framework

2.2 Analytical Framework

Definition of key concepts

Table 12: The pluralistic nature of the Nepali language and its theoretical foundation

Concept	Definition	Theoretical basis
linguistic pluralism	Multilingualism: positive attitude	Fishman (1972)
Sanskritisation	The process of lower castes/tribes adopting the culture of higher castes	Srinivas (1952)
Linguistic justice	The principle of providing equal opportunities for all languages	Kymlicka, 1995

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research plan

This study adopts a qualitative research method and encompasses three major approaches:

(a) Historical Analysis Method

(b) Policy Analysis Method

(c) Comparative Analysis Method

3.2. Data collection method

3.2.1 Primary Data:

Social media analysis. In particular, efforts were made to search for or mine related articles, links, comments or reactions to articles.

Facebook/Twitter data: (a) Discussions related to hashtags such as #ShuddhNepali and #AdivasiBhasha. (b) Comments from Pragya Pratishthan's official page. (c) Posts from linguists and activists for the rights of indigenous people.

YouTube Analysis: (a) Talk shows related to language policy (b) Comments under indigenous language shows

Advantages: (a) public opinion and sentiment can be assessed, and (b) analysis of natural discourse.

Document analysis: (a) Academy publications (b) Policy documents of the Ministry of Education.

3.2.2 Secondary Data:

Academic Publications: Yadava (2017). Subba (2020) writes about language contact in his works on ethnic languages and other works in language and anthropology.

International Reports: UNESCO (2021) Report on the Language Crisis; World Bank (2021) Education Studies.

3.2.3 Data Analysis Methodology:

Thematic analysis:

- (a) Identify dominant themes in concerns over linguistic pluralism.
- (b) Search for examples of language prejudice within the policy documents.

3.2.4 Comparative analysis:

- (a) Comparison of language policies in India, South Africa and Nepal.
- (b) Comparison of Nepal's policy with international guidelines.

3.2.5 Historical Analysis:

Attempt to reconstruct contributions made by indigenous languages to the genesis of Nepali.

3.3 Limitations of the Study

- Lack of time: inability to study the long-term effects of language policy.
- Linguistic limitations: the absence of written texts for many indigenous languages.
- Access to policy-related information: less data is available regarding internal policy-making by the academy.

4. Contribution of indigenous languages to the Nepali language

4.1 Khas-Tribal Linguistic Interaction

We find that there are over 500 words in Nepali taken from Magar, Limbu, and Newar (Yadava, 2017):

Tribal words: 'Tongba' (fermented drink) and 'Dhido' (traditional food)

Related to nature: 'Chiya' (from the Limbu 'chiya') and 'Rukh' (tree from Magar 'ruk')

4.2 The multidimensional nature of linguistic interaction

The Nepali language is not a creation of one-directional acculturation; it is a synthesis of the coordinated interaction of several languages. Here are a few examples.

Borrowing of words:

From Limbu: Chiya (tea), Yak (mountain ox)

From Newar: Jhyal (window), Guchha (bunch)

From Magar: Rukh (tree), Pat (leaf)

Grammatical Influence: Mother tongues play an important role in influencing the morphology of Nepali words. They have an impact on the shape of Nepali words (Yadava, 2017).

4.3 Historical paradox of Sanskrit-centric policy

In Nepali, we accept Sanskrit words such as 'swagatam', while we do not accept the indigenous word 'aangantuk', meaning the same thing (Subba, 2020). Similarly, we insist on replacing the useful word 'mobile' with the unfamiliar and unpalatable 'hastachalit durbhas', without even considering that it is the wrong word and its intention is not to enrich language but to alienate it from people.

The trend of the Rana period was making Sanskrit the official "high language", while branding mother tongues as "vulgar". More disturbingly, in 2078 BS, the language policy reads, "Sanskrit words have been accorded primacy in Nepali" (Government of Nepal, 2021), disregarding linguistic diversity.

However, 'language purity' has been the topic of debate within present linguistics since languages are affected by so many historical, social, political and economic factors (Fishman, 1991). Another illustration is multilingualism as constitutionally imposed in India; the eleven Most widely spoken Indian languages have been nationally recognised in South Africa. They have also been among the ones contributing to the definition of language identity in a lot of multilingual countries, helping to live together peacefully.

5. International Perspective: Linguistic Inclusion

5.1 Indigenous/English words in India's "Hindi"

"Danda" (Dravidian), "jungle" (Persian), and "table" (English) are accepted words in Hindi. Interestingly, the Official Language Commission takes into account regional languages to create vocabulary (Kothari, 2018).

5.2 UNESCO's Language Preservation Policy

It is crucial to note here that "multilingual education has been designated as a human right" (UNESCO, 2019), and the global community has declared indigenous languages to be "endangered" to help them survive (Ethnologist, 2023).

5.3 Linguistic Inclusion – A Comparative Analysis

(a) India's multilingualism: the English word 'table', the Persian word 'dukan' or the Dravidian word 'danda' finds its place in the general vocabulary. The lexicon of these languages is developed by the Official Language Commission along with state languages (Kothari, 2018). (b) South Africa's Constitutional Solution: The 11 national languages of South Africa, which are Zulu, Xhosa, English, etc., have been recognised as the national languages. Policy: Medium of instruction in mother tongue at the school level (UNESCO, 2022).

5.4 UNESCO Framework for language preservation

There are 28 Nepali languages on the list of "endangered languages" (Ethnologue, 2023). But there does not seem to be any focused attention by the state and academic institutions on this cause. Especially after the monolingual policy established in the Rana period, most of the mother-tongue youth were

compelled to give priority to Nepali. In contrast to this, after the political transformation, the language policy, writers, academicians, etc., are seen trying to promote Sanskrit-oriented purity instead of making the Nepali language dynamic, prosperous and inclusive, reflecting continued boycotting rather than respect for indigenous consciousness and language diversity, which are definitely serious issues and need immediate attention.

6. Problems and solutions in Nepal's language policy

6.1 The controversial role of Pragya Pratisthan

The idea and tendency to reject indigenous words in the name of "pure Nepali" is fatal. In this, rather than a linguistic perspective or scientific idea, the colonial tendency has given indigenous languages the status of a national language only on paper, but this has not been seen in practice. In policy, indigenous languages have always been ignored by labelling them as uncivilised languages. However, when examining the background of the Nepali language structure from a linguistic perspective, the following is clear.

Example:

"Tongba" (fermented drink) is "impure". Alcohol, wine or beer is considered pure and holy. On the other hand, it seems that they are trying to impose impractical terms like "hastachalit durbhash" for "mobile".

6.2 The threat of language extinction and its impact

There are currently 28 languages in Nepal that are "endangered" (UNESCO, 2021). But the attention of the state and educational institutions does not seem to be focused on its protection. With the imposition of monolingual policy since the Ranas, many of the mother-tongue youth have had to give primacy to the Nepali language. Even after the political change, rather than endeavouring to establish the Nepali language as a vibrant and enriched indigenous language, writers, policymakers, and educators appear to be attempting to establish a Sanskritic standard. This is not only a boycott; it is also a disregard of indigenous awareness and diversity.

Languages such as Kusunda, Raji, and Dura are spoken by fewer than 50 people each (UNESCO, 2021). The state is morally responsible for preserving and reviving these languages. The status of Nepali as the official language also places it in a supportive and enabling position. Ironically, the information about Nepal's endangered languages is only from English, foreign sources, as such. We are uncertain what the government/academy has done and achieved. Is it a matter of what they have done but not published the information about or what they have done nothing about? Who has the answer? Policymakers need to honestly self-evaluate on such questions.

The erosion of cultural identity: Indigenous knowledge systems as language disappears (ethnobotany and traditional medicine). It destroys. There is no concern expressed about this. This is a challenge to tribal civilisation and culture.

6.3 Solutions: Suggestion of a pluralistic language policy

Formal recognition of words indigenous to the native language: inclusion of native words in the Nepali dictionary, such as 'Tongba', 'Dhindo' and 'Chiya', as words in indigenous languages.

Education Reform: Primary-level education should be delivered in the mother tongue, for which a Nepali-tribal bilingual curriculum must be formulated (UNESCO, 2022).

Constitutional Support: Indigenous language should be awarded "national language". Not just the declaration of language as national, but the implementation of various policies and programmes must accompany the provision, which should be borne in mind while discussing the purity of the Nepali language.

6.4 Solutions: Pluralistic language policy

As an ideal long-term solution to such complex issues in a multilingual country like Nepal, a pluralistic language policy seems to be the appropriate measure. A pluralistic policy signifies a policy under which the state will recognise and guarantee the right to preservation, development and utilisation of all the languages present within its domain, not treating them as threats but as assets. Pluralistic language policy does not merely provide security for linguistic existence, but it also supports knowledge, cultures, social relationships, etc. Embodied within a language.

There are three interventions which are most important to achieve the pluralistic policy: first, mother tongue-based primary education; second, acceptance of local language used in local administration and local communication; and third, the state invests in local language content creation and local language research. Countries like India, South Africa, and Canada have had successful implementations of these.

Nepal, too, with the adoption of a pluralistic language policy, would not only help boost language but also social inclusion, ethnic regard and democratic culture. For this, policymakers need to revise the current language policy. The need of the day is to abandon the approach that focuses solely on the "purity" of the Nepali language and adopt an inclusive, pragmatic and pluralistic approach.

7. Conclusion:

7.1 A new era of linguistic justice

The future of Nepal linguistically has to be modelled on "unity in pluralism". To this effect:

A. History needs to be set right: the Nepali language will embrace indigenous ownership.

B. Language learning through mother tongue: With the use of mother tongue education, there is a 60% increase in educational attainment (World Bank, 2021).

C. Digital inclusivity: Special attention will be paid to technology, as technology can be used for the sustainability of minority languages.

7.2 The abolition of the "pure Nepali" concept and the development of the "prosperous Nepali" concept.

There is no point in rejecting the present reality of language and in developing the idea of "pure Nepali" while the concept of "prosperous Nepali" must be fostered. This concept leads to making the Nepali language mixed, flexible and inclusive. According to the proposed linguistic structure, the Nepali language:

40% of words are of Sanskrit origin.

30% of words originated from indigenous languages.

20% of words come from English or other foreign languages, and

10% may include regional linguistic variations.

This linguistic diversity is presented in a manner consistent with the fundamental rights of the Constitution (Article 32) and the Directive Principles of State Policy (Article 51). The basis of linguistic justice is to develop the Nepali language and other national languages of Nepal on an equal footing. For this, the future language policy should be implemented in a manner that provides equal opportunities not only in terms of policy but also in educational curricula, media, and administrative implementation.

7.3 Areas of research:

There should be longitudinal research about the effects of multicultural education in schools in Nepal. We need to consider if technology can help to maintain minority languages.

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[16] The Responsibility of Writing: From Social Reality to Academic Decolonisation

Introduction

Society is a living laboratory in which new colours of experience are added every instant. These experiences might be personal or group. When an observer puts their experiences into words, they constitute a 'document'. The writer gathers these experiences from the depths of society and shapes them into a work. We read those works as stories, poems, or novels, but they are not only literary works; they are time's traces. Today's Nepali literature sector is preoccupied with capturing the present, while the guts to brush off the dust of the past and reread and reinterpret history are also emerging.

1. Documentation and literature of social experience

Literature is called the mirror of society, but it is not just a mirror; it is also a light that shows the way to the future of society. When a writer documents the experiences of society, he does not just write down the details of the events but also records the human emotions, struggles, and psychology of the social structure behind those events.

The current era of Nepali literature is very dynamic. The writers of the present day are not only engaged in imagination, but they also attempt to provide voices for the masses. This activism clears the present society and erects a strong base for the next. When we read a literary work, we are actually feeling the pulse of the society of that time.

2. Reinterpretation of history: why and how?

Some writers in society are dissatisfied with what appears on the surface. The present and past studies of this nature are investigated by them. Who wrote our history? How was it written? And from which perspective was it written? These are the issues debated in the intellectual sphere today. Rethinking written history, canonical writings, and reconstructability is a contemporary necessity.

Histories are written, largely, from the standpoint of the 'victors' or the 'ruler' (dominant group); this completely ignores marginalised groups' culture and knowledge system. What is needed today is to search for those excluded realities. The history which we read might be a one-sided affair. Real writing involves the search for the other standpoint.

3. Political consciousness and intellectual vacuum

In the last couple of decades, Nepal has been passing through different political and social transition processes. Nepal entered into democracy and federalism from feudalism; there has been a massive political awakening among the Nepali people. This consciousness was mirrored in writing and literature. However, a major question arises: has our intellectual and academic advancement been commensurate with political consciousness?

Ironically, while politics has evolved, our style of thinking and academic thought remains old and colonial. Universities and academic institutions have not achieved the degree of research and unique

thought that is expected. The use of political slogans in writings has become commonplace, yet their endorsement and critical examination in academia have always been marginal. Literature certainly exhibits the clear imprint of the political and ideological inclinations of its writer, yet a balanced and factual analysis still stands out for its absence.

4. Journey of decolonisation – a challenging necessity

As attractive as it may be, the 'decolonisation' of literature, culture and history is equally difficult. It is not only the exclusion of external influence but also an attempt to identify and correct what is often 'self-colonised' within a community.

Society and the institution will resist anything that contradicts their ideas and facts. When arguing against an idea that has been 'true' for centuries, the writer has to take some risk. This risk is both institutional, to a degree, and potentially social. Yet there are times, historical moments, when a writer needs to put ease and aesthetics away for the sake of conveying the 'naked' fact.

In the Nepali context, the issue of 'Sanskritisation', the creation of a unifying, national narrative encompassing all languages, cultures and histories in Nepal, has obscured many indigenous epistemologies. In the current day, the 'decolonisation' process seeks to academicise Indigenous epistemologies, cosmologies (Mundhum) and identities.

5. Smooth dialogue on 'tough' matters

We frequently seek activities that are simple, comfy, and enjoyable. But life and the world are not always simple. Some aspects of society are so harsh that hearing or reading about them might make you uneasy. However, a conscious writer should not shy away from such topics.

Only a calm discourse can overcome complex issues. When the pen shies from such unpleasant facts, the mind will fall into indolence. The pain of a past hurt should never mean that we will reopen the wound. Instead, it should mean trying to understand how that pain was caused and what it would take to bring about healing. Through discussion, the human mind learns, and we as a society march forth.

6. Construction of the future and the duty of the writer

The writer is not merely the observer of his/her time but the builder of the future. Future societies will have to read the words of the writer of the present to form identities and as a source of pride. Hence, it is crucial, while writing, for a writer to consider why he/she is writing what he/she is and how the future is influenced by what is being written.

Our literature should not divide society but rather help to find harmony in difference and create a just society. Until we can perceive our own history and culture with our own eyes, we will be forced to view the world through the spectacles of others. Breaking out from such dependency will be the biggest accomplishment of today's writers.

Conclusion

Writing is an ongoing activity. While documenting societal experiences, we should equally focus on academic and intellectual development. Political transformation alone will not complete society; mental and intellectual liberation are required.

Decolonisation is difficult but unavoidable. Pen should not be afraid of expressing 'raw' but true knowledge. When the pen dares to take risks, when the pen dares to express the truth, there shall be a

new perspective, a valuable trajectory for our society. Historical rebuilding and a clear and sober vision of our time would make up for the brightness in our days ahead. Thus, the pens of today should be involved not merely for amusement but for great discussions of ideas and great debates of the decolonisation struggle. Writing is not a collection of characters but the birth of consciousness and the impression of time.

[17] Limbu Oral Tradition and Nepali Written Poetry in the Literary Landscape of Nepal: A Comparative Discussion

Summary

This essay does a comparative analysis of Limbu oral literature and Nepali written poetry. It discusses the literary characteristics and common influences of Nepal. It also explores the role these literary traditions have played in cultural and identity formation.

This study is conducted from the perspectives of ethnography, performance studies and comparative literature. In this process, the structure, language and social and cultural aspects of Mundhum, Palam and Khyali of the Limbu oral tradition have been studied. In addition, Nepali written poetry, and especially the works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota, have also been analysed.

The study shows a clear claim to indigenous identity in Limbu literature. Nepali poetry, on the other hand, reflects modern thinking and feeling. Additionally, it delves into the means of dissemination and authors and the subject matter of the literature of both traditions. Overall, it can be said that while the two literary styles have had their independent evolution paths, they cannot be divorced from each other. This interconnectedness is most conspicuous when dealing with issues of marginalisation and nationhood. This comparative research gives insight into the peculiarities of Nepal's literature and the ceaseless flux of culture that it represents.

Keywords: Limbu oral literature, Nepali written poetry, Mundhum, Palam, Khayali, comparative literature

Introduction

Literature can be seen as a manifestation of culture, which can reflect the customs, history and ideology of the people of the society. Nepal, being a multilingual and multiethnic nation, has two very distinct yet parallel traditions of literature that have helped in constructing the knowledge of Nepalese culture, which are the oral Limbu literature and the written Nepalese poetry.

The Limbu oral literature stems from the Kiranti tribal tradition and is a case of oral tradition where stories are narrated and ritual traditions are passed down in speech and action. This traditional structure has played an immense role in the survival of the Limbu language and Limbu culture (Limbu, 2020; 2023).

In contrast, Nepali written poetry is mostly based on writing; here, one can find considerable influence from the literary tradition of India, and this is vital for the purpose of creating a repository of national literature (Chalis, 2020; Timalisina, 2024).

This article intends to establish an interface between these two modes of literature through the juxtaposition of their specific characteristics as well as their points of similarity and contrast, and endeavours to highlight their significance in building the historical and cultural narratives of the nation.

The Limbu, or the Yakthung, are a community that belongs to the Mongoloid race, having their own language and culture and, consequently, a rich history of traditions (Limbu, 2020; Subba, 2025).

The oral Limbu literature, especially the Mundhum, cannot be classified simply as folklore. It has been considered as sacred scriptures, which consist of creation myths and a corpus of moral instructions of Limbu society (Limbu, 2020; 2023; Subba, 2025).

They are oral traditions passed down from one generation to another, helping to preserve the Limbu traditions (Chongbang, 2022).

With great poets like Laxmi Prasad Devkota, Nepali literature and poetry, in particular, have seen enormous advancement in style, genre and mode. Devkota has added new craft and consciousness into poetry, and by the middle of the twentieth century, he brought modernism into Nepali poetry that embodied a progressive view of society and evolving notion of nationhood (Chalis, 2020; Timalisina, 2024).

The main intention of the paper is to balance these two genres of literature through comparison of the poetry in style, theme and purpose and explore socio-cultural influence within Nepal.

Justification / Research Interval

Both oral traditions in Limbu culture and written traditions in Nepali poetry are culturally important. However, there is little systematic comparative research into their connection. So far most have been dealt with in isolation. Mostly Nepali mainstream literature has enjoyed an upper hand (Limbu, 2020; Tumbahang, 2020; Chalise, 2020; Timalisina, 2024).

This kind of context highlights several research gaps:

First of all, we don't have much interdisciplinary study. There is much research done on Limbu ethnography (Limbu, 2020; Tumbahang, 2020) and on Nepali literary modernism (Chalisey, 2020; Timalisina, 2024), but not much effort to understand them interactively.

Secondly, there is a lack of representation of marginalised people, for most national literary repertoires are written texts; hence, their presence overrides oral traditions in the canonisation of indigenous culture, knowledge and aesthetics (Rai, 2019; Rai, 2024; Lungeli, 2023). Through a comparative study, this paper can investigate Limbu oral literature's perpetuation of their indigenous identity as well as its confrontation with the mainstream literary canon.

Thirdly, the study of socio-political circumstances of literature has been inadequate. Both literary traditions have been exposed to marginalisation, language policies, assimilation, etc. (Streltsova et al., 2020; Rai, 2019), but their effects on their manifestation remain unknown.

Fourthly, there has been the issue of method in comparative literature between the two literary traditions, for their form of transmission, ownership and construction are different (Damrosch, 2020), which may make it hard to reach a comprehensive comparison.

Fifthly, both traditions have suffered from global and modernity impacts; it will be meaningful for the present research to examine whether Limbu oral literature either fits in or resists global/modern onslaught as compared with Nepali poetry, which accepts modernity to show cultural change (Chongbang, 2022).

This thesis aims to examine all of the above lacunae by studying the specificity of each literature and also analysing carefully the relationship between these two literatures in close proximity.

Theoretical framework

This research study will use an interdisciplinary theory approach to conduct this comparative study. The theoretical approaches that will be applied here are listed below.

1. Anthropology and ethnography of communication

The ethnographic and anthropological approach to the study of language is a useful one here for the analysis of Limbu Mundhum. The theory views the relationship between language and culture as one deeply intertwined. It explains the transmission of social thought and cultural experience through the use of language and communication in the context of rituals (Limbu, 2020; Tumbahang, 2021).

Through this theoretical framework, we can begin to analyse the various linguistic elements found within Limbu oral literature as well as its place within the day-to-day lives of the people (Tumbahang, 2020).

2. Performance study

The study of performance will prove essential in the examination of Limbu oral literature. Performance studies see oral traditions as living entities; "an oral tradition is a process of social and cultural knowledge creation and transmission transmitted through a performance of tales and rituals" (Limbu, 2023). This theory is therefore essential to the study of Hakpare, Palam and Khyali, who are fundamentally traditions based on performance (Lungeli, 2025; Tumbahang, 2023; Limbu, 2021).

3. Comparative literature

I will be using comparative literature not in its original Eurocentric sense but in the context of the critical debates of recent years, which "make it possible to read literatures across languages and cultures comparatively" (Kobis et al., 2023; Damrosch, 2020). This will enable me to read literature with distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds for themes of modernity, identity and marginalisation, thus furthering the concept of 'world literature' (Kobis et al., 2023).

4. Postcolonial and Indigenous Studies

This theory, which has explicitly been used to interpret indigenous literature such as that by Limbu, "enables the establishment of the interaction between indigenous literature and dominant national literary tradition" (Lungeli, 2023; Rai, 2024). This theory makes it possible to see the role of authorial self-representation in suppressed literatures in a certain historical period. The poetic traditions of Limbu literature to be dealt with clearly demonstrate inclusionary nationalism and its boundaries (Rai, 2024).

All these theories I will be able to put to use in order to provide a coherent comparative interpretation of the oral poetry of Limbu literature with the written poetry of Nepali literature and of their respective sociocultural and political circumstances.

Methods

This study is based on qualitative research using a descriptive and analytical method. A textual and cultural performance study was conducted, and it was focused on the use of non-numerical information. Data was taken from various peer-reviewed books, journals, and articles regarding Limbu oral literature and Nepali writing poetry (Tumbahang, 2020, 2021, 2023; Timalisina, 2024).

1. Data Collection

Limbu oral literature

A great extent of information is from studies on Mundhum (Tumbahang, 2020; 2021) and studies regarding Palam song, both oral literature which is accompanied by music (Tumbahang, 2021; 2023; Limbu, 2021). Information from studies on Khyali is also incorporated (Lungeli, 2025).

Research on modern Limbu poems and narratives has also been conducted (Lungeli, 2023; Rai, 2019). Information on phonetic features, cultural importance and context of performance was taken from the aforementioned research.

Nepali written poetry

A critically written analysis of Laxmi Prasad Devkota is taken into consideration, analysing the themes, stylistic approach and use of various literary techniques in his poems, also focusing on his contribution to the subject of Nepali literature modernism (Chalishe, 2020; Timalisina, 2024).

Also, indigenous poems written in Nepali in quest of defining national symbols and analysing dominant trends have been included (Rai, 2024).

2. Analysis Approach

Thematic analysis

Various common themes present in both the literary traditions have been observed: the explanation of existence, love, social values, identities, and instances of marginalisation (Limbu, 2020, 2021; Tumbahang, 2023; Chalise, 2020; Timalisina, 2024; Rai, 2019, 2024).

Linguistic and stylistic analysis

The study also involves investigation of distinctive linguistic elements of oral literature in Limbu language, like those of ritual and honorific terms (Limbu, 2020; Tumbahang, 2020; 2024).

Also, word usage and sentence structure in Nepali written poems were investigated and compared to oral literature (Chalis, 2020; Tumbahang, 2022; Panth, 2023). Furthermore, phonetic differences used in Nepali spoken by native Limbu have been observed and explained how different phonetics lead to different meanings (Tumbahang, 2022).

Social and cultural contextualization

This method involves a study of how different literary traditions express social and cultural situations. Included in this approach are transmission of cultural knowledge, claims of identity and coping with external factors. The study also considers the urbanising impact and dominance of metropolitan culture (Limbu, 2023; Rai, 2020; Chongbang, 2022).

Comparative Framework

There were various comparative factors which were directly related between oral literature and writing poems, such as manner of transmission of literature and ownership, as well as social and political factors affecting writing and speaking about literature.

All these analytical approaches were conducted together to present the comparisons of the above two types of literature in a clear and precise manner.

Presentation and discussion

Nepal's Poetry-- Fragrance to Written Sobriety

The literature of Nepal is multilinguistic and multicultural. One side has its long-standing poetical tradition by the Limbu people based on the Mundhumi philosophy, and another side has its written poetry, the Nepali language, which has had its unique identity from ancient times to the present day.

1. Representative Samples of Limbu oral poetry

Limbu literature is mainly based on Mundhum (oral literature). The Hakpare, Palam and Khyali are some genres of Limbu literature which represent the Limbu people's life philosophy, love, society, etc. (Kainla, 2012).

A) Hakpare

The Hakpare genre is philosophical and solemn in nature. They are mostly sung during funeral rites or serious social gatherings.

In the Limbu language: *"Oh...kbedaba mennin, keplab mennin, sisaaba mennin, nuba ben sapla? Hakpare..."*

Nepali translation: "Oh... Nothing is there that cannot be, nothing that cannot age; there is no one there that cannot die. What is the best thing? To breathe..."

Meaning: This poem inspires humans to have patience and acceptance of the mortality and immutability of human life. The essential message it gives is that the world is mutable and finite, but words and culture are eternal.

B) Palam

"Kerak kusing mennin, merum taksing mennin, suwa samlo lokme, palam samlo sakme."

Nepali translation:

"Not everything is known, not much is understood; let's sing a song and enjoy the rhythm of palam."

Meaning: This style reflects human relationships, love, and a deep closeness to nature. It goes beyond simple aesthetics. It preserves the history of our ancestors and tells the sacred story of creation.

C) Khyali

Khyali is a genre based on intelligent questions and answers and jokes.

In the Limbu language:

"Asaba hein sakman, khyali sakman, ningwa kerumba le hein..."

Nepali translation:

"Whatever says what, let me say, Khyali, this is what makes the mind clear..."

Meaning: It sweetly satirises social anomalies and makes people realise the truth in a funny way. This is a model of the eloquence of Limbu society.

2. Development of Nepali written poetry and representative signatures

Tracing the literary history of Nepali written poetry, it seems that it has evolved from a discourse of linguistic uniformity to that of societal protest (Pradhan, 1984).

A) Bhanubhakta Acharya and Bhaktidhara (earlier period)

Bhanubhakta Acharya (1871-1925) was the first poet in the Nepali language who tried to bring scattered Nepali minds under a single string of language through his rendering of 'Ramayana'.

Sample verse: *"Ek din Narada satyalok pugi gaya loko garaun hit bhani. Brahma tabin thiya parya charanma khusi garaya pani."*

Meaning: This phrase represents Devarshi Narada's activism efforts to benefit the ordinary people. Bhanubhakta's literary style is simple and lyrical. Previously, Nepalese poetry was reserved only for the king's court. He changed this by replicating complex Sanskrit lyrics into a simpler Nepali language. Through this approach, he made poetry accessible to the general public.

B) Lekhnath Paudyal and modernism (later period)

The poet Shiromani Lekhnath Paudyal (1941-2022) is the founder of the 'modernist' trend of Nepali poetry, in which emphasis was laid on word purity, the law of rhyme and the moral aspect of poetry.

Sample (caged parrot): *"Balak baburo dwiz suka nama, chha ma pareko aja pijarama."*

Meaning: The poem may seem to be an outward description of a caged parrot's suffering, but its intrinsic significance shows the freedom-loving Nepalis trapped in the ruling system of the Rana regime under global reign during that time and also portrays the philosophical bondage and freedom of soul.

c) Laxmi Prasad Devkota and Liberalism (Modern Period)

Mahakavi Laxmi Prasad Devkota has been referred to as the 'literary notable figure of Nepal'. He boldly deviated from orthodox classical romanticism. Instead, he established a new genre characterised by genuine human emotion and creative imagination (Subedi, 1999).

Sample (Target): *"Manisa thulo dilale huncha jaatale budaina."* "A human is created not with caste but with a huge heart." Meaning: These lines sharply criticise 'casteism', which is the most abhorrent phenomenon in Nepali society. Devkota considers mankind the supreme religion, and his poetry is enriched with natural beauty, sympathies to the poor, and lofty notions of liberty.

D. Contemporary Poetry and New Consciousness

After the political changes in 2046 and 2063 BS, the voices of identity, existence, and the oppressed class are being expressed more vociferously in Nepali poetry. Contemporary poetry has started to voice the untold stories of 'silenced' communities in the past. Sample (from 'Bise Nagarchi's Statement' by Shrawan Mukarung):

"Maharaj ! Ma ta Gorkhako euta budho damai, tapainko simana silaunda silaundai apthaipathiechhu."

Meaning: This poem reiterates the contribution made by the labour and sweat of the lower classes to building the nation and questions the ignoring of such individuals, like Bise Nagarchi, the craftsman responsible for stitching the borders (defending the country).

The two branches of Nepali literature, Limbu oral poetry and Nepali written poetry, have contributed equally to the cultural and intellectual heritage of Nepal. While Limbu literature places high importance

on "collectivism" and "love of nature", Nepali written literature is based on "individual craftsmanship" and "social reformation".

3. Form, style and transmission

These two currents of writing flow in complement to each other in the present context. Limbu oral literature depends entirely on spoken words. This oral transmission is its defining feature. Without it, the literature loses its vital cultural role. Mundhum is a sacred ancient writing, and it is a form of folk literature too.

The Yakthung Limbu personage orally presents this by means of narrating and performing it. It is a discourse about their social ideas and tradition (Limbu, 2020; 2023). The oral transmission is based on the inheritance of knowledge and cultural experiences across generations and is primarily based on ritualistic and ethnographic forms of communication (Limbu, 2020).

Folk songs such as Palam and Khyali are transmitted orally; these songs are performed and developed by means of singing and interpersonal communication, and they are a form of performative art (Lungeli, 2025; Tumbahang, 2021; 2023; Limbu, 2021).

'Palam' is a Limbu folk song quite popular among the community that expresses love, practicality and dignity in social life (Tumbahang, 2023; Limbu, 2021). Its communicative power was also analysed using the politeness theory (Tumbahang, 2021). Based on writing, Nepali poetry relies on formal composition, drawing on Sanskrit literature to mould writing in a significant part (Chalice, 2020).

Laxmi Prasad Devkota also strongly emphasises authorship and the written word (Chalice, 2020). His way of writing is, in fact, entirely original. His poem writing was very clearly anti-traditional. Most notably, he experimented with free verse in his epics. These characteristics are all attributed to its written form of communication (Chalice, 2020). This difference in modality impacts how authorship, preservation, and evolution take place, whereas written poetry is influenced by the intent of individual authors, stability of the text and personal interpretation; oral literature is dictated by memorisation, performance and community contribution.

4. Linguistic and stylistic features

The language of Limbu Mundhum is described as being intricate. It is a language which can be difficult to comprehend even for native speakers and has its own phonetic and syntactic patterns (Tumbahang, 2020). There are many types of honorifics found in the Limbu language, displaying politeness in terms of communication as well as in social relations (Tumbahang, 2024).

These traits can be related to the Tibeto-Burmese family of the Limbu language. On the other hand, the Nepali language is of Indo-Aryan origin. The linguistic difference between the two types of language is why deviations have occurred in the Nepali speech of the speakers of the Limbu language. Phonetic and sociolinguistic differences result in the existence of lenition (soft) consonants, fortification (hard) consonants and honourific asymmetry (Tumbahang, 2022).

The Nepali poetry, in particular the modern one, also has its own characteristic experimentation with form. Devkota brought in Western myth and experimented with form and subject and broke the traditions that were inherited from the Sanskrit language (Chalice, 2020). In Nepali literature, his poems have been

considered representative of his social concerns through his personal experiences and experiments and also of the modernity of the time (Timalsina, 2024).

Nepali belongs to the Indo-Aryan group of languages. In general, Nepali bears a complete contrast to other Tibetan languages, such as Limbu, in grammar and structural aspects. Linguistically, it can be linked to the Rajbanshi and Bhojpuri of the Indo-Aryan family of languages (Acharya, 2023; Pantha, 2023).

5. Thematic engagement and identity building

Both literatures are related to identity formation but in different terms. Limbu oral literature strongly presents indigenous identity. Mundhum, folk songs, and contemporary poetry clearly express the uniqueness of the culture. The stories and rituals of Mundhum bear in them the cultural and social significance of the entire society (Limbu, 2023). Contemporary Limbu poets write ekphrastic poems that show the physical form of the indigenous identity and the Limbu body that differ from dominant literature (Lungeli, 2023). This form of literature stands against the historical marginalisation. It is an endeavour to establish the Limbu language and script (Subba, 2025). The agony and plight of the Limbu people and marginalisation within dominant Literature is evident in the writings like 'Lato Pahad' by Upendra Subba (Rai, 2019; 2020).

Written poetry also had a significant role in shaping the nation. In his poem, Devkota represented national identity and the development of modernity through poetry (Timalsina, 2024), even though he draws on mythology to express himself; he is characterised by an individualistic and experimental mindset that contributes to the construction of national consciousness (Chalisey, 2020; Timalsina, 2024). But this national literature also faces criticism, as some Kirat poets describe it as exclusionary literature (Rai, 2024), and it critiques dominant symbols of the nation and calls for inclusive nationalism (Rai, 2024).

6. Intersection of dynamics and challenges

This is not only the difference between the two literatures; it's a fluid relationship between the two. For example, "Macaronic Khyali" shows oral tradition incorporating the Nepali language and other linguistic codes spontaneously and creatively, which reveals the "mestiza consciousness" built up in the contact zone (Lungeli, 2025). This aspect exhibits the resilience of oral literature; it could absorb influences from other languages and cultures. But there are some challenges as well because the traditional transmission of Mundhum stories and rituals of the Limbu is deteriorating due to the development of urban lifestyles and the loss of community life (Chongbang, 2022).

The field of comparative literature itself is challenged with the Western paradigm, and its methodology dominates it, but this problem can be reduced by adopting a world literature approach (Kobis et al., 2023). By understanding different folktales from comparative literature, it is evident that such studies enable a deeper understanding of world literature and demonstrate how Limbu oral literature and written Nepali poetry contribute significantly to world literature beyond the confines of nation or language. It has been an ongoing endeavour to protect and promote the Limbu language, and poets resort to digital technology as a platform to showcase their writings.

Conclusion

Comparative analysis of Limbu oral literature and the written poetry of Nepali showcases the multifaceted world of Nepali literature and its varied forms and relationships. Limbu oral literature, which includes Mundhum, Palam and Khyali, reflects community knowledge and preserves performance

tradition. Marginalised by the mainstream, it represents a strong Indigenous identity and language. The oral style, with its richness and linguistic sophistication, represents the great significance in the culture transmitted through its tradition. Contrary to this, written poetry represents individual voice and modernity. Poets like Laxmi Prasad Devkota propelled the concept of modernity and established national literary identity through poems and innovative styles and crafts in writing, thereby facilitating discourse on modern thinking and lifestyle.

Despite the differences in forms and the mode of transmission, the two literatures are not isolated; contemporary tribal poems also critique dominant literatures and reflect their voices by seeking an inclusive identity, language and nation, but linguistic and textual differences pose obstacles in the dialogue between two genres and also illustrate the expressive capacity of language.

In Khyali, there is an endeavour to safeguard the Limbu language by using foreign languages and original writing styles, and this reveals constant negotiation of tradition and modernity. This comparison will enable a better understanding of Nepali literature, illustrate the importance of oral literature and raise questions about the politics of forming literary theory and including marginalised voices. Future study could explore the ways in which digital technologies affect oral literature and the ethics of writing oral literature. It could also study the impact of globalisation on the oral traditions of the subaltern.

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Theme 6: Contemporary Policy, Law, and the Digital Future

[18]The conflict between indigenous expression and cultural hegemony in Nepali academic discourse

Summary

In this paper, I try to reflect on linguistic colonisation and cultural hegemony in Nepali literature, language and scholarship. It is already widely recognised that language is more than a mere tool for communication. It embodies power and hierarchy. For a long time, words used in Nepali scholarly writing have been labelled "vulgar" and "rustic", and it has been accepted in the academic field that highly Sanskritised, jargon-filled language will carry the label of being more "educated" and "civilised".

Using examples such as the folk proverb "thutuno ra mutuno jogaunu" and the public health use of indigenous terms versus the word "yaunanga" for simple mutuno, this article examines how linguistic hegemony works in society. Drawing on the ideas of Antonio Gramsci, M. N. Srinivas, and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, the paper argues that reviving indigenous language and grassroots knowledge is an important step towards the decolonisation of history and culture.

Keywords: linguistic decolonisation, cultural hegemony, acculturation, indigenous knowledge, medical anthropology, folk psychology.

1. Introduction

Language is the carrier of human consciousness, culture, and identity. However, no language is absolute and free from power relations. The perspective of the class at the centre of power always dominates in the writing of history and the standardisation of language. Looking at the linguistic history of Nepal, it is seen that a specific class has had intellectual control over the indigenous folk culture, oral traditions, and the 'Jharro' language spoken by the people of the lower classes.

In critical or academic writings, the criterion of 'civilised' and 'uncivilised' lies in 'politics of society' and 'elitist mentality' more than in grammar. It is in this vein that the words uttered in the rural area, the proverbs with an earth-stink, and the words representing organs of the body are labelled 'obscene' or 'improper'. This kind of linguistic narrowing ultimately pushes the common people away from their original identity and indigenous philosophy and pushes them towards a sense of inferiority. Therefore, decolonisation of language has become the primary need of today to reinterpret history and criticism.

2. Theoretical framework

To provide academic strength to the analysis of this paper, three established social and linguistic theories are used as a basis:

Cultural hegemony (Antonio Gramsci): According to Marxist thinker Gramsci, the ruling class does not rule only through physical or legal force; it establishes its ideas as 'universal truth' or 'standard of civilisation' through education, language and culture. In Nepali, Sanskrit-based words are shown as 'high', and folk words are shown as 'low', which is a series of linguistic hegemonies.

Sanskritisation (M.N. Srinivas): According to sociologist Srinivas, acculturation is the process by which lower-class or tribal communities, to gain social prestige, abandon their indigenous values, language, and lifestyle and blindly adopt the culture and language of the so-called upper class. This leads to the gradual disappearance of original folk vocabulary.

Decolonisation of the mind (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o): African thinker Gugi believes that the first thing that colonial power attacks is a person's language. When a person becomes ashamed to speak his mother tongue and native words and starts taking pride in the colonial language, then his mind becomes completely enslaved. Therefore, it is imperative to return to linguistic patriotism for the revival of history and philosophy.

3. Case Study 1: The Elitist Attack on the Folk Proverb 'Thutuno and Mutuno' and Folk Psychology

There is a lively proverb that has been prevalent in Nepali folk life for centuries—"Thutuno ra mutuno jogaunu". An analysis of this proverb from a linguistic perspective (deconstruction). It carries a very deep and disciplined philosophy of human behaviour and health psychology.

Here, 'thutuno' (mouth) signifies restraint of speech, discreet expression, and dignity of social interaction. Speaking in modern communication media (such as telephones or mobiles) while speaking or speaking only after thinking is a practical continuation of this. On the other hand, 'mutuno' (biological genitals) signifies physical discipline, moral character, and sexual morality. The folk psychology behind it is that a person who can control these two organs is protected from accidents in society.

However, an anonymous reviewer's criticism of the word 'mutuno' used in the essay as "inappropriate for the Nepali language" highlights the 'Victorian morality' prevalent in our field of criticism. And exposes the one-sided spectacle of Sanskrit. The tendency to see vulgar words that describe biological and natural processes but find complex Sanskrit words that convey the same meaning does academic violence to the language of the people. This proverb is an excellent example of a vulgar word, prohibiting which is against linguistic democracy.

4. Case Study 2: Medical Anthropology and Public Health Communication: Indigenous Metals Versus 'Maithun'

This conflict is not limited to literature; it has also created a major disruption in the fields of medical anthropology and public health. In grassroots Nepali society, there are primary sexist words or idioms in the vernacular that people understand when talking about sexual and reproductive health. However, due to cultural and linguistic politics, such vernacular words are considered extreme 'slang' or 'taboo'. As a result, health science materials were loaded with words imported from Sanskrit, such as 'maithun' or 'sambhoga', which the general public cannot immediately understand.

The class division of language is clear here:

1. Only a limited elite class who have studied Sanskrit or have access to higher education can immediately understand the meaning of the word 'Maithun'.

2. The common people, for whom health awareness is most needed, are kept away from the mainstream of knowledge because of these complex words (knowledge exclusion). They will be.

Although there is academic difficulty in giving formal status to the indigenous term due to its history of anger or abuse, the alternative is to leave out simple terms that the general public can understand, such as 'physical contact' or 'sexual intercourse', and simply adopt a Sanskrit-based purism. The shift towards it is a continuation of linguistic colonisation.

5. Conclusion and roadmap for linguistic democracy

The Nepali academic world and the critical arts have still not been able to free themselves from the trappings of culturalisation and colonial mentality. To label proverbs and natural words that carry a vivid vision of folk life as vulgar or deviant is to hinder the development of the language.

A true decolonisation of history and language is only possible when we abandon the veneer of artificial intelligence and embrace the indigenous flavour and oral tradition of the people at the centre of academic discourse. A new generation of researchers and writers must break down this linguistic clutter and class walls.

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[19] Nepal's multilingual structure and oppression of indigenous languages: Statistical and legal analysis of the National Census 2078

Summary

This review paper examines the endangered status of indigenous languages in Nepal through sociolinguistic and statistical analysis. Based on data from the National Census of Nepal 2021, the current paper analyses the multidimensional nature of languages in Nepal: language families, spatial distribution and language politics. Languages belonging to 4 major language families – the Indo-European, Tibeto-Burman, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian language families – are found in Nepal. Latest census data presents, on the one hand, a high prevalence rate (44.86%) of the Nepali language still leading, and on the other hand, the proportion of the population sharing other native national languages is declining day by day. Although the efforts to determine the language of government work at the provincial level appear positive, the way in which the law and the judiciary sidelined indigenous languages due to the state's historical 'one-language policy' is discussed in the light of historical and legal phenomena. Finally, practical suggestions are presented for safeguarding Nepal's multilingual diversity.

Keywords: Census 2021, language families, linguistic oppression, Kamayako language, Raithane language, sociolinguistics.

1. Introduction

Nepal is a multilingual nation as well as a multi-ethnic and multicultural society. The size of Nepal in geography is quite small, and so are its languages, but the number and variety of languages are a unique laboratory for the entire world. Even though the constitution of Nepal itself states that "All mother tongues spoken in Nepal shall be considered the national languages." " But the distance of linguistic hierarchy and discrimination is still far from reconciled (Government of Nepal, 2015). The merit of being a linguistically vibrant country goes to the tribal and indigenous people who kept their mother tongues alive despite state apathy. This article tries to identify and map the languages across the country, trace out the trends and look into the legal barriers of linguistic injustice through analysing the original data of the latest 2021 census of Nepal on linguistic and statistical bases.

2. Rationale for the study

Multilingualism is the asset and the identity of Nepal; however, as the unitary and centralistic nature of the state in Nepal has been using the policy of 'one language, one nation' for so many years, indigenous mother tongues have become endangered. In view of the publication of the 2021 census, this study will be indispensable to identify the current statistical data and classification of the languages based on their language family and review working language implementation at the provincial level. Further, it identifies the oppressive and exploitative history of the mother tongues of the indigenous communities at the legal and judicial level, demanding linguistic justice. The article is justified by this very advocacy.

3. Theoretical and research methods

The study of this research is the linguistic and linguistic-politics approach. The established theories like 'linguistic imperialism' of Phillipson (1992) and the concept of 'linguistic capital' of Bourdieu (1991) have been the theoretical ground.

As for research methodology, the research is of quantitative and qualitative natures; in nature, it's based on mixed-method research:

Source of data: Original Report of National Census 2021 published by the Government of Nepal National Statistical Office (National Statistical Office, 2023)

Statistical Analysis: Calculations of population and percentages, comparative analyses and mapping of trends based on languages, language families and geography.

Qualitative analysis: Analysis of legal documents in Nepal, historical Supreme Court judgements, and provincial linguistic policies.

4. Analysis of population and statistics of Nepal based on Language Families

The languages spoken in Nepal fall mainly into four major language families – the Indo-European, Tibeto-Burmese, Dravidian, and Austro-Asiatic language families. Along with 'lonely languages' such as Kusunda (language isolate) (Yadav, 2004).

The total population, along with percentages of languages of Nepal based on their respective language families, according to the latest census, 2021, can be presented in the following table:

Table 13: Population status by language family in Nepal (Census 2021)

S.No.	Language families	Number of languages spoken	Speaker population	Percentage (%)
1	Indo-European (Indo-European)	18	2,40,11,985	82.33
2	Tibeto-Burmese (Sino-Tibetan)	98	49,00,424	16.80
3	Austro-Asiatic (Austro-Asiatic)	1	49,858	0.17
4	Dravidian (Dravidian)	1	42,698	0.15
5	Lonely and others (Isolate & Others)	6	59,613	0.20
	Total	124	2,91,64,578	100

Source: Based on classifications from the National Statistics Office (2023) and the Language Commission (2023).

Looking at the statistical structure of Table 1, the demographic dominance of the Indo-European language family in Nepal is extremely visible. 82.33% of the total population is occupied by the languages of the Indo-European family (Nepali, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tharu, etc.). In contrast, the Tibeto-Burmese family, which has the largest number of languages (98) in Nepal, has a speaker population of only 16.80%. This makes it clear that there are many small indigenous languages within the Tibeto-Burmese family whose number of speakers is very thin, and those languages are rapidly becoming endangered (Tuba, 2009). The presence of the Austro-Asiatic (Santali) and Dravidian (Jhangad) families in Nepal seems to

have reached almost zero (0.17% and 0.15%, respectively), which needs special protection from the state level.

Table 14: Major indigenous languages of Nepal and number of speakers (Census 2021)

S.No.	Language	Language families	Speaker population	Percentage (%)
१	Nepali	Indo-European	1,17,48,548	44.86
२	Maithili	Indo-European	29,47,413	11.24
३	Bhojpuri	Indo-European	16,25,079	6.19
४	Tharu	Indo-European	15,45,345	5.89
५	Tamang	Tibeto-Burmese	13,05,232	4.98
६	Buzzer	Indo-European	10,54,973	4.02
७	Newari (Nepalese language)	Tibeto-Burmese	8,24,448	3.14
८	But	Tibeto-Burmese	7,89,360	3.01
९	116 other languages	Miscellaneous	33,24,180	11.40

Source: National Statistics Office (2023)

5. Distribution of languages by geographical area and regional differences

Nepal's topography (mountains, hills, and Terai) has directly influenced the distribution of languages here. Due to geographical location and historical migration patterns, linguistic density varies in different regions.

Table 15: Distribution of languages in the Himalayas, Hills and Terai

geographical area	Major linguistic plurality (language family)	Major languages	Linguistic character and tendency
Himalayan region	Tibeto-Burmese (mainly)	Sherpa, Tibeto, Manange, Dolpo, Lhopa, Thakali	Low number of speakers but geographically indigenous and dense. Language decline among the younger generation due to migration and foreign employment (language loss) is intense.
Hilly area	Indo-European and Tibeto-Burman	Nepali, Tamang, Newari, Magar, Rai, Limbu, Gurung	The Nepali language dominates as a 'lingua franca' (contact language). Indigenous languages under the influence of linguistic encroachment by the Nepali language.
Terai region	Indo-European, Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic	Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tharu, Bajjika, Awadhi, Jhangad, Santali	The presence of demographically large languages. Administrative neglect despite strong cross-border linguistic continuity and media influence.

The Himalayan region of Nepal, despite being the birthplace of the indigenous Tibeto-Burmese languages, has been pushed towards extremely low population and extreme remoteness. In the hilly region, the Nepali language is swallowing up other indigenous languages (Magar, Rai, Gurung, etc.). Most hilly indigenous peoples have been forced to adopt the Nepali language, forgetting their mother tongue in their own homeland (Pokharel, 2010). The Terai region is linguistically very dense; there, the Madhesi and Tharu communities are firmly using their languages, but the mainstream of the state has always viewed these languages with suspicion and neglect.

6. Trend of prevalence of Nepali and Indo-European family language in Nepal

When we look at the past censuses of Nepal, it appears that the trend of prevalence of the Nepali language and the entire family of the Indo-European language group has been different from each other. According to the linguists, recent decades have seen a fabricated increase in Nepali language speakers since the government policy has actively promoted it. After the return of democracy in 1990 and the people's movement in 2006, awareness of linguistic identity was strengthened and increased (Awasthi, 2008), thereby causing people to revert to their own original mother tongue and lowering the percentage of Nepali speakers to 44.6% from 58.4% in 1981.

However, the latest census, 2021, shows a modest increase in the percentage of Nepali language speakers (from 44.6% to 44.86%). The main reason for this is the lack of transmission of small indigenous languages to the lower generations and the increase in the use of a single language (Nepali) due to urbanisation. Although the number of speakers of other languages of the Indo-Aryan family (Maithili and Bhojpuri) appears to be stable or slightly decreasing, the share of the overall Indo-Aryan family in Nepal is still strong at around 82%, indicating that it is suppressing other language families.

7. Status and assessment of working languages in provincial governments

Table 16: Additional languages approved for official work by province

State	Additional working languages accepted	Current implementation status and challenges
Koshi region	Maithili, Limbu	The law has been passed, but Nepali still has a monopoly on documents, signboards, and applications in government offices.
Madhesh Province	Maithili, Bhojपुरi, Bajjika	Usage has increased at some local levels as a large portion of the population speaks it.
Bagmati Pradesh	Tamang, Newari (Nepali language)	Although the act was recently passed and announced for implementation, it has been difficult to put into practice due to bureaucratic apathy.
Gandaki Province	Magar, Gurung	Although symbolically welcomed, implementation is limited to paper due to the lack of procedures and human resources at the administrative level.
Lumbini Province	Tharu, Awadhi	Despite the high density of Tharu and Awadhi speakers, documentation and translation seem to be at a standstill.
Far Western Province	Doteli, Tharu	Although the Doteli and Tharu languages are partially recognised, their use in the judicial sphere is nil.

Clause (2) of Article 7 of the Constitution of Nepal provides that, in addition to the Nepali language, a province may designate one or more other national languages spoken by the majority of the people within its territory as the language of official business of the province in accordance with the provincial law (Government of Nepal, 2015). On this basis, various provinces have designated languages on the recommendation of the Language Commission (Language Commission, 2023).

Although it is a historic achievement for the provinces to declare their mother tongue as the working language on paper, the centralised mentality of the bureaucracy, language transfer, and translation due to the lack of technology and budget have been limited to cheap political popularity. The situation in the courts and administration persists where non-Nepali speakers cannot get justice or services without an interpreter.

8. Historical oppression and legal and judicial marginalisation of indigenous languages

The history of oppression and marginalisation of non-Nepali national languages in Nepal is long and systematic. The expansion of the Shah's empire, and especially the Rana rule and the Panchayat period, created a game of extermination of indigenous languages through the 'one language' policy (Sontag, 2002). During the Panchayat period, 'Radio Nepal' was even banned from singing songs or broadcasting news in other languages.

Phenomenon 1: Historical ban on mother tongue in education

Before federalism, the National Education System Plan (NESP) of 2028 BS made Nepali the only medium of instruction in schools in Nepal. This led to the forcible closure of traditional schools that

taught in the 'Siruanga script' of the Limbuwan and the 'Ranjana script' of the Newar community. This broke the chain of transmission of the traditional language forever.

2nd Event: The infamous Supreme Court "Language Judgment" (1999)

On June 1, 1999 (18 Jestha 2056 B.S.), the Supreme Court rendered the most offensive judicial order against native languages ever in the history of the Nepalese language movement.

Kathmandu Metropolitan City decided to use Newari (Nepal language), and Dhanusha Municipal Corporation and Rajbiraj Municipality decided to use the Maithili language in their respective local administrations. However, a case was filed in court against this decision. The then Supreme Court issued an injunction stating that "local bodies shall not be allowed to use any national language other than Nepali as the language of work" (Supreme Court, 1999).

This decision legally marginalised indigenous languages by prohibiting the use of the language spoken by the majority of the population at the local level in their own offices. This event is remembered by linguists in Nepal as a 'linguistic black day'.

9. Conclusion and suggestions

Conclusion

Looking back at the 2021 census figures and Nepal's linguistic history, although it is a multilingual country officially, it is a monolingual country in reality (structurally, legally). The language Nepali of Indo-European stock holds all the state's linguistic capital, which has killed native languages from the Tibeto-Burmese, Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic groups. While the declaration of working languages at the provincial level is a positive step, due to the lack of legal mechanisms and administrative will, these languages are still forced to wander outside the confines of the courts and government offices.

Practical tips

1. Realisation of trilingualism: Trilingualism should be enforced without fail at the federal, provincial and local levels with Nepali, provincial language and indigenous language, respectively.

2. Provision of an interpreter in court is mandatory: the court should permit the use of the mother tongue at the time of recording statements of mother-tongue speakers, provide free interpreters to the mother-tongue speakers (interpreters) and legally guarantee the provisions.

3. Investment in education and technology in the mother tongue: The system of compulsory provision of education in the mother tongue up to the primary level should not be limited to paper but should be provided with textbooks and teachers.

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[20] Technologization of Indigenous Languages and Knowledge Systems: A Technological Pathway for Global Expansion and Human Well-being

Summary

This paper is focused on the requirement of a systematic method to diffuse the indigenous languages and their associated indigenous knowledge around the world by computer technology. Indigenous languages carry the nature-human relationship, indigenous ways of healing, and specific life philosophies (e.g., Mundhum philosophy), which have been linked together for many hundreds of years. As of today, Nepali is not at par in the level of Unicode and machine translation with other indigenous languages of Nepal. The objective of this paper is to introduce indigenous languages into "digital treasury", "parallel text" and "natural language processing" (NLP). It addresses how to make knowledge world-class with simple examples. The Unicode development, keyboards and machine translation in the context of Limbu (Sirijanga script) are presented in this paper. This work, done based on the decolonisation theory and computational linguistics, aims to introduce indigenous knowledge to open access. The finding of this paper is that its proliferation around the world enhances all human beings.

Keywords: Indigenous dialect, Mundhumism, digital repository, machine translation, open access, decolonisation, Limbu language, Sirijanga script.

1. Introduction

The richest, liveliest part of human civilisation is undoubtedly its indigenous languages and the indigenous knowledge system inherent in them. Numerous languages, civilisations, and ideologies have long existed in Nepal (Yadava, 2005). Indigenous dialects here are not merely communicative; they contain indigenous cosmology, poetry and the fine art of living in natural balance. For centuries, the linguistic heritage of dozens of indigenous communities (Limbu, Newar, Tamang, Magar, Gurung, Rai, Sherpa, Tharu, and so on) has held its own truths, reasons and ways of living. (Tumbahang, 2010).

Unfortunately, the strong colonial basis of Western modernity and technology has trapped only a few powerful languages of the world in computer technology, and, along with it, we are forgetting our native languages, our native truths embedded in the languages. There are 6,000, approximately, living languages in the world, and UNESCO (2021) reports 43 per cent of them to be endangered. Twelve endangered languages are critical; that is, they are endangered to the point where fewer than 1,000 speakers exist (as is the case with languages in Nepal).

Only technology makes a language survive in this age of information. This article is dedicated to achieving three objectives: (1) to examine conceptual and practical opportunities for the technologisation of indigenous languages, (2) to discuss in detail the globalisation of indigenous knowledge for the benefit of human civilisation, and (3) to recommend ways to empower indigenous communities to become creators and owners of technology rather than its passive subjects.

2. Justification

This research is justified for multiple reasons. First, indigenous languages are rapidly declining. (Krauss, 1992). There is a profound fear that our knowledge and wisdom, inherited in oral form, are being lost in the new generations. Second, solutions to many of our mental and environmental crises in modern times lie embedded within our indigenous lifestyle and biological philosophies. Third, while language technology markets globally include more than 100 languages, only the Nepali language from Nepal (not other indigenous languages) is found in Google Translate. This is denying the digital citizenship rights of speakers of other indigenous languages. Thus, the rationale for this article is primarily to lay out the road map of this fusion of technology and linguistics.

3. Theoretical framework

This paper is informed by three theories:

A) Decolonisation theory: This theory questions the role of the West in producing knowledge and argues for a rehabilitation of indigenous knowledge. (Tuhivai Smith, 2021) Integrating languages into technology is one aspect of decolonising knowledge.

B) Computational linguistics and natural language processing (NLP): This theory is the branch of science that concerns the relationship between computer and human languages. (Joshi et al., 2020) It is one field that covers machine learning and LLMs. According to this notion, computers need a specific quantity of digital text in order to comprehend a language.

C) One of the tenets of the socio-technical systems theory is that technology is not autonomous from the social world but that it is deeply embedded in cultural values and power relations. One can contribute to the status of indigenous languages by taking the world views and cultures underlying technological instruments such as Unicode, fonts, keyboards, or translating software, as Wiebe Bijker (1995) suggested.

The interaction of the three principles described above can make up a system for carrying the indigenous philosophy in the digital world.

4. Research Methodology

This paper is mainly desktop research and qualitative analysis, focusing on a systematic review of recent literature in the area of language technology, computational linguistics, and Nepalese indigenous languages. The literature search included materials related to low-resource NLP from 2000 to 2024, decolonisation theory and Nepali language technology. The digital status of the Limbu language, Unicode fonts and recent efforts of the Kirat Yakthung Chumlung formed a core part of the contextual analysis. This approach combined both conceptual analysis and practical implications.

5. Presentation and discussion

The following five socio-technological steps have been identified to globalise Nepal's indigenous languages through technology and preserve local knowledge systems. The sixth step has been added based on your suggestions.

5.1 Unicode encoding and script modernisation (computer citizenship)

Unicode is the first gateway for any language to enter the digital world. It can be understood as the "citizenship" that allows a language to enter the computer world. The following five socio-technological

steps have been identified to globalise Nepal's indigenous languages through technology and preserve local knowledge systems.

Special reference to the Limbu language:

Unicode codepoints for the Sirijanga script in 2003 (U+1900–U+194F) It had been determined. SIL International has been named 'Namdthinggo SIL '. The font is the main font of this script. But in terms of practical use, progress was slow for a long time. However, Kirat Yakthung Chumlung took an important initiative in BS 2081 Kartik – developing a completely Unicode-based, free-to-use, and mobile and computer-compatible Sirijanga keyboard. It is reported that seven to eight lakh rupees were spent on this development, and members of Chumlung worked as volunteers. This has made digital access to the Limbu script much easier. However,

It also has a major limitation: this keyboard is only useful for those who know how to type in the Sirijanga script. Most of the younger generation who can speak Limbu but do not know the Sirijanga script are left out.

5.2 A digital text corpus is the most crucial food for AI and machine translation.

A computer will need millions of words collected to learn the grammar and lexicon of language, all by itself. Two kinds of corpora we require are monolingual corpora and multilingual corpora. The greatest difficulty is that most of the indigenous knowledge we have is oral (Bird, 2020). In Mundhumian sagas, marriage degrees live only in the mouths of elders. Without a corpus of a minimum of one million words, AI will not be able to know the inner meaning of a language. Joint effort is necessary among linguists, anthropologists and the community to develop a corpus.

5.3 Parallel Datasets and Machine Translation (Bilingual Forum)

'Parallel text' is essential for machine translation. The following table provides an example of this:

Table 17: Limbu, Nepali and English translations (see Nepali or English article Limbu)

Native language (Limbu / Yakthung Paan)	Nepali translation	English translation
<i>Mundhumge anige hingmalle thimma lam be.</i>	<i>Mundhum nai hamro jeewanke mool bato ho.</i>	Mundhum is the core path of our life.
<i>Phaktanglunglle (Chokyungle) anichaan me-uttenen bi?</i>	<i>Pahadle hamilai pukardaina ra?</i>	Doesn't the mountain call us as well?
<i>Anige Tagera-phangwaba-bahille iksa-khambekmalle thik-kaa me-tuktenen.</i>	<i>Hamra purkbahrule prakritilai kabihyai noksan garenan.</i>	Our ancestors never harmed nature.

At least 50,000 to 100,000 such pairs should be created. Neural Machine Translation (NMT) technology can be trained on such a dataset and provide accurate translations. But currently, such a large parallel dataset is not available for Limbu. Its creation is the biggest need at present.

5.4 Open Access (Open Access Repositories): Who is Pivot?

Big tech companies only use data freely available on the internet to train their AI models (Bird, 2020). If our data remains locked up in commercial copyright, AI will never learn that language. Solution: Collected datasets from Zenodo, FigShare, or GitHub in the zinc stores. Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY 4.0). It should be placed under a licence. This gives researchers around the world the freedom to use it. Also, it is a consensus that respects the intellectual property rights of the community. It is equally important to take.

5.5 Supporting local knowledge systems and human communities

When indigenous languages begin to be translated digitally, there are three major benefits:

Indigenous healing systems, such as the Mundhumi treatment and herbal therapy, reach global medical discourse.

Indigenous knowledge shows us how to live as one with nature, offering fresh ways to fix the climate crisis (Krauss, 1992). Young people are much more likely to learn their native language if they can find fun digital content in it.

5.6 Combination of transliteration and literal translation (essential ease)

This is the most important point to address my main question and suggestion. The Chumlung keyboard mentioned in point 5.1 above is only useful for those who know how to type in the Sirijanga script. But it does not work for most of the younger generation, teachers, writers, and researchers who know how to speak Limbu but do not know the script. They are proficient in Nepali or English keyboards.

Real ease comes when:

- The user types Nepali (or English).
- The system automatically transliterates it into Sirijanga script. (Example: Nepali "Limbu" → Sirijanga)
- In a more advanced case, the system translates entire sentences from Nepali/English into Limbu. (Example: Nepali: "What is your name?" → Limbu ("Ke ming the bi?").

This second type of system (sentence-level translation) requires a large parallel dataset, which is not currently available. But the first type of transliteration tool (Nepali → Sirijanga) requires only a one-to-one character map, which is technically easy. This tool can be developed right now.

Therefore, until this easy "Nepali writing, Limbu seeing" (type in Nepali, see in Limbu) Until a system and public machine translation service are available, large-scale production of content in the Limbu script and its global dissemination are difficult. So, to begin with, the focus and highest priority must be on designing systems for transliteration and machine translation rather than trying to measure the extent of technological development in the language solely based on Unicode and keyboard issues.

6. Drawbacks and problems

While this course of action appears to be fertile ground, it does pose some daunting problems:

- Consent of the community: Parts of Mundhum are sacred and are not to be read by anyone outside. The problem is that releasing such data would be an infringement of such prohibitions. Solution: Releasing and including the data has to be the consensus of the community.

- Technological and financial costs: There is considerable storage space, recording equipment and human resources to be invested in. The current governmental expenditures in this respect are minimal.

- Loss of semantics: Depending on the context, a phrase can be interpreted in multiple ways, and machine translation may not pick up this point.

7. Conclusion and suggestions

Conclusion

Indigenous languages are not just relics of the past. They guide humanity's future. Today's technopolitics heavily demands that other indigenous languages, like Nepali, build automated translation tools. To do this, we must develop Unicode systems, digital corpora, and parallel datasets.

However, we need more than just custom keyboard layouts. We must build transliteration and machine translation systems that anyone can use, even without knowing the native script. Preserving these languages in translation systems and open-access repositories does two vital things. It decolonises indigenous history, and it helps communities worldwide build a sustainable, natural, and rich way of life.

Tips

1. Develop a Nepali-Sirijanga transliteration tool immediately (this is possible at low cost and quickly).

2. Digital Collection Campaign: Launch a national campaign to translate oral knowledge into Unicode, involving the government, universities, and indigenous organisations.

3. Parallel dataset creation: Accelerate the work of creating Limbu-Nepali-English parallel sentence pairs (currently, there is a huge shortage in this area).

4. Open Data Policy: Collected data and datasets CC BY 4.0 Under licence Zenodo, FigShare Keep it open.

5. Investment in AI and NLP: The computer scientists in Nepal will create NLP tool(s) for their local language.

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Theme 7: Decolonising the Mind: Reclaiming Indigenous Identity and Global Belonging

[21] The Global Himalayan: Linguistic De-territorialisation and the Decolonial Identity of the Nepali Diaspora

Abstract

This paper probes the socio-linguistic changes in today's transnational, global Nepali diaspora under the theoretical perspectives of linguistic de-territorialisation and decolonial identity politics. In a milieu of millions of Nepali settlers in Europe, North America, the Persian Gulf, and East Asia, Nepali, deterritorialised from Nepal, transforms in structure, function and ideology. Moving past simplistic models of assimilation, this study illustrates how communities in diaspora use linguistic resources to resist the structural inequalities in the receiving societies and dismantle historical, high-caste ethno-linguistic dominations in institutionalised Nepali identities. Drawing on the qualitative, multi-sited netnographic and narrative approach, the chapter probes digital contexts, cultural works and intergenerational language use across various transnational nexus points. This article argues that linguistic de-territorialisation plays a two-fold role: precipitating heritage language loss among third culture children while simultaneously producing a pluralistic, "Global Himalayan" decolonial identity which subverts mono-nationalism through a focus on indigenous voices, hybridised vernaculars and multiple layers of belonging.

Keywords: Nepali diaspora, linguistic deterritorialisation, decoloniality, sociolinguistics, transnationalism, global Himalayas.

Introduction

A stereotyped view of the Himalayas, of rugged landscapes isolated from the flow of global modernisation, now seems hopelessly antiquated. The modern globalised world of economic migration and political turmoil has thoroughly undone this geography of immobility. The Himalayas are global. Millions of Nepalis are working, living, and building a new identity far beyond Nepal's borders in cities like London, New York, Qatar, Tokyo, or Sydney.

As bodies move, so too do languages. Yet language itself does not simply reproduce itself when taken out of its soil. This chapter attempts to understand the sociolinguistics of global Nepali communities through the intersecting lenses of linguistic de-territorialisation and decolonial identity formation.

For centuries, Nepali, or Khas Kura, has been the dominant language of the state apparatus in nation-building, social stratification, and intranational colonisation under the Shah and Rana regimes (Onta, 1996; Turin, 2014); its institutionalisation in "Ek Bhasa, Ek Bhesh, Ek Desh" (One Language, One Vesture, One Nation) under the Panchayat system resulted in the denigration of Nepal's abundant indigenous (Adivasi Janajati) languages and regional dialects to the point that a Sanskritised Nepali would become a singular token of civilised belonging.

In the diaspora, however, this monolithic state-sanctioned hierarchy of language becomes disrupted. De-territorialised from the state apparatus, the Nepali language now has to negotiate, compete and co-exist with languages such as English, Japanese, and Arabic, as well as the long-suppressed indigenous languages of the Himalayan region, such as Nepal Bhasa (Newar), Tamang, Gurung, Rai, and Limbu.

This chapter contends that the Global Himalayan space can indeed serve as a site of decoloniality, and by charting how diasporic subjects manipulate, hybridise, or claim ownership over linguistic repertoires, we can delineate a "Global Himalayan" identity that deterritorialises the language of the coloniser/state and inscribes a translocal and pluralistic self.

Rationale

While the economic, political and psychological dimensions of the global Nepali migration have received considerable attention (von der Heide & Hoffmann, 2001; Hutt, 2003), the specific interface of language shifts and decolonial theory has not yet been deeply explored. Sociolinguistic analyses of Nepal mostly discuss the danger of language endangerment or multilingualism within the existing geopolitical boundaries of the nation-state (Yadava, 2014), while general linguistic research of migration subsumes South Asian migrants under the broad category of "Indians" or "South Asians" and, thus, Nepali migration under "Indian migration".

This neglect masks a crucial fact about Nepal: while the nation-state was not colonised by external Western powers, there was an intense process of "intra-national colonisation" by a caste elite of hill dwellers imposing a linguistic and cultural hegemony on diverse segments of the population (Lawoti, 2005; Tamang, 2006). It is this intra-national coloniality that this paper proposes to investigate in its transplantation to global space. In a technologically advanced, multi-lingual world, Nepalis are not directly connected to the homeland through its geography but through language, the internet, multi-ethnic metropolitan centres and consumption patterns. The present chapter seeks to contribute to scholarship by showing how the process of linguistic de-territorialisation allows diasporic Nepalis to subvert the power hierarchies of the homeland, process host-country marginalisation and redefine the meaning of "Himalayan".

Theoretical Framework

Three interlocking theoretical paradigms will be used to analyse the linguistic and identity dynamics of the global Nepali migration: Deleuze and Guattari's notion of "de-territorialisation", Mignolo and Quijano's concept of "decoloniality" and Vertovec's work on "transnationalism".

Linguistic De-territorialisation

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1987), de-territorialisation is a process of the uprooting and detachment of a field of social relations from its primary geographical or conceptual space. Within the sphere of linguistics, de-territorialisation has been discussed as a practice that mobile individuals and groups perform where they uproot languages from their traditional territories and established institutions (Jacquemet, 2005; Blommaert, 2010). Such languages get embedded and "re-territorialised" into different, potentially new, socio-cultural territories – such as virtual spaces or workplaces in another country – where they come into contact with other systems of signs and meanings. In the case of Nepali, the process of de-territorialisation moves it away from its Kathmandu-based, scholarly and political control, making it accessible to diverse vernacular practices, simplification strategies and borrowed terms.

Decoloniality and Coloniality of Language

Decoloniality is a paradigm originating in the work of critical Latin American scholars which seeks to understand and transcend the "enduring systems of power, knowledge and being that emerged from the colonial encounter" rather than limiting the analysis to the historical event of colonialism itself (Quijano, 2000:216; Mignolo, 2011:40). Following Veronelli (2015), "coloniality of language" can be defined as how colonial/imperial structures map onto particular language groups as indicators of ethnicity, civilisation and inferiority/superiority in the global discourse. Within Nepal, the coloniality of language has been imposed through the systematic enforcement of Khas-Nepali's linguistic supremacy over the nation's multitude of indigenous languages. The diaspora, therefore, resists both the coloniality of the global capital that employs it and the coloniality of the nation that marginalises it through the utilisation of linguistic hybrids and indigenous revival.

Transnationalism and Translinguistics

The term 'transnationalism' refers to the continuing and multiple social, cultural, economic and political relationships that people maintain across the borders of their countries of origin and settlement (Vertovec, 2009). Within this fluid context, traditional models of code-switching or linguistic competency appear insufficient. Instead, we need to develop and apply a "translinguistic" framework that regards linguistic practices not as a series of separate languages but as one continuous system of signs that migrants use in navigating their complex transnational identities.

Methods

This study applied a qualitative and interpretative approach and explored the complex linguistic reality of the Nepali diaspora. It draws on netnography and narrative enquiry methods developed by Robert Kozinets (2010) and Catherine Kohler Riessman (2008). Data were collected over 18 months, from late 2024 to early 2026.

Data Collection

The following are the main sources of data used for this chapter:

1. Digital Netnography: Continued ongoing ethnographic observation of transnational online sites: observation of linguistic encounters, code-meshing and performance of identities on:

- Well-liked and significant online Facebook groups that represents crucial diaspora communities, such as "Nepalese in London", "Nepalese Students in Australia", and "NRNA" groups;
- TikTok and Instagram accounts that feature second- and third-generation youth that are enacting their Himalayan identity;
- Online platforms, transnational artist-producers, scholars, and intellectuals (podcasts and YouTube shows).

2. Narrative Interviews: Semi-structured, extensive narrative interviews were conducted with 24 (N=24) individuals representing a diversity of age groups/generations in diverse locations:

Table 18: Participants from social media

Cohort / Generation	Number of Participants	Primary Locations	Age Range
First-Generation (Migrated as Adults)	8	Gulf States (Qatar/UAE), UK, USA	35–55
1.5 Generation (Migrated as Children)	8	Australia, Canada, Japan	24–34
Second/Third Generation (Born Abroad)	8	UK, USA, Hong Kong	16–23

Data Analysis

All interviews were conducted in various languages, such as English, Khas-Nepali, and the fusion of both, depending on what the interviewee felt comfortable communicating. After the transcription and necessary translation, all interview material was put under thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The emergent themes regarding linguistic insecurity, recovery of ancestral languages, digital linguistic subversions and reinvented definitions of indigenous Himalayan identity were all inductively coded.

Findings and Analysis

The Disruption of State Hegemony: Romanised Vernaculars and "Globalised" Nepali

First, it is important to note that the main discovery concerns structural and orthographic shifts that have occurred in the Nepali language during its deterritorialisation into digital and transnational contexts. For decades, the integrity of written Nepali as a structure was protected by state bodies like the Nepal Academy and by the formal school system, both of which prescribed rigors regulations over Devanagari orthography, Sanskritised lexical items and rigid gendered verbal inflexions (grammar).

The translation away from Devanagari to Nepali written in the Roman English script text, from the perspective of the diasporic Nepali community, marks a highly democratic move away from this state-instituted authority over written Nepali. Since the majority of Western digital keyboards support only the Latin script, a highly fluid, phonetic, non-standardised Romanised writing style has been created by the Nepali diaspora.

"Hami jaha bhae pani, jasto language bole pani, hamro identity ta change hudaina ni. Nepal ko tyo orthodox soche bhandi bidesh ko mixed culture dherai progressive chha."

(Wherever we are, whatever language we speak, our identity doesn't change. The mixed culture abroad is much more progressive than the orthodox thinking of Nepal).

In this digital text, several modes of linguistic de-territorialisation are at play. First, there is the weaving of individual English lexical items (language, identity, change, orthodox, mixed culture and progressive) into the Nepali syntactical structure. More significantly, however, is the removal of traditional symbols of educated, class-biased, and caste-biased schooling that exist in correctly written Devanagari. As a participant (1.5 generation) in Sydney puts it,

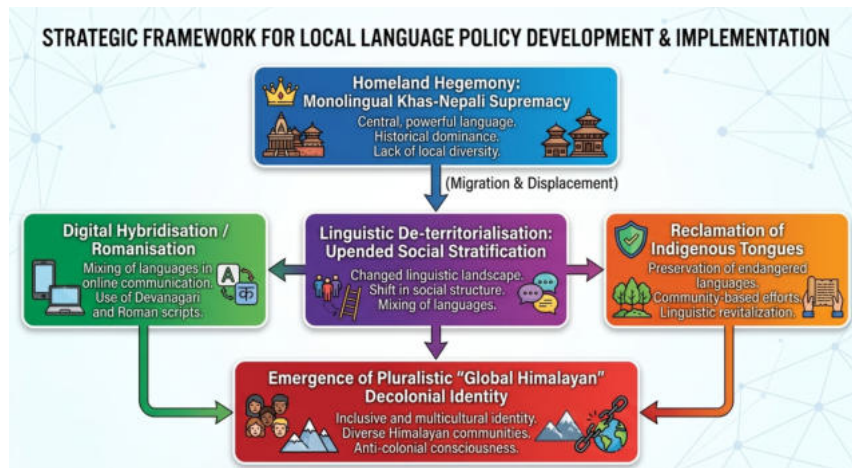
Kathmanduma 'raswa' leke or 'dirgha' leko (lost) bhayo vane timro buddhi nai chhaena, tei dekhera class ta yo thyo ni vanxan. Diasporama, or on the internet when we write in Nepali in Roman script, there is no judgement of the class or your origin just for dropping or adding 'raswa' or 'dirgha'; everything is levelling the ground.

Through the establishment of a hybridised, Romanised vernacular, members of the diaspora can dislodge the language from its domestic, institutional owners and re-use language to foreground issues of urgent communication, emotional solidarity, and networking in a lateral fashion rather than a vertical, gatekeeping one.

Reclaiming the Suppressed: Indigenous Language Revival as a Decolonial Project

In the diaspora, the desire to recover indigenous languages (Adivasi Janajati languages) of their parents, who gave them up in Nepal, thanks to the homogenising pressures of the state during the Panchayat regime, demonstrates a strong expression of decolonial identity. In the previous regime, speaking a mother tongue other than Khas-Nepali was largely frowned upon in public and at school, causing a quick language shift in the younger generations, leading to linguistic trauma for indigenous families.

It is in the democratic and material-free space of the diaspora that a revival of these languages has been made possible. The young diasporic artists, out of reach of the casteist public scrutiny of the high caste in Kathmandu, have begun using online platforms for reviving and disseminating their ethnicity-specific linguistics.



A second-generation Indigenous Rai participant living in New York shared her journey:

"My parents never taught me Rai, because they grew up in an era where speaking it made you look 'uneducated' or 'backwards' to the ruling class in Kathmandu. They prioritised Nepali and then English. But living here in New York, surrounded by different cultures, I asked myself, 'Why should I accept a single version of Nepali identity that was forced upon my ancestors?' I started taking virtual Rai language and Mundhum culture classes online. Reclaiming these words is my way of healing that historical erasure."

This story reflects an intelligent embrace of decoloniality, the participant's identification of existing colonial institutions within her country and its subsequent sabotage by directly eluding the national language to revive her mother's indigenous language. By this, she expands what it means to be "Nepali" to an expanded, pluralistic, global Himalayan self, one that respects local, indigenous histories within a globalised world.

Negotiating Host-Country Marginalisation: Translinguistics and "Third-Space" Subversions

Although it is the stage on which home-country inequality is also deconstructed, the diaspora also challenges migrant subjectivities and confronts them with systemic marginalisation in their host countries. In navigating the structurally vulnerable reality of contract labour in Doha or the muted racism of Anglo-centred institutions in London, the diasporic Nepali worker occupies the space of a racialised, linguistic minority. In this space, the diaspora constructs what Homi Bhabha, a theorist of postcolonialism, refers to as a "Third Space" – a hybrid and dynamic site wherein marginalisation is both contested and managed through a practice of "creative translinguistic resistance". Such is demonstrated vividly in the linguistic practices of the first generation of migrant labourers in the Gulf, where the dialect commonly known among labourers as "Pure-Arab", or Khas-Nepali with Arabic, Hindi, and English components, has emerged as a form of creative and subversive communication:

"We do not use the elite Arabic that our superiors speak. We do not use the pure Nepali language of our homes. We have developed a unique language, born out of our struggle and existence. Mixing Arabic with Nepali syntax creates an effective protection shield. The boss does not know our mutual understanding, and the folks back home cannot truly comprehend our agony. The language is exclusively ours alone."

Within such a context, translinguistic practice becomes a form of subaltern everyday resistance to decolonisation. In challenging the monolingual norms of the host country and the homeland, these subaltern migrants simultaneously establish a micro-locale in which to affirm the existence and human dignity of their shared experiences while processing the pain of late-capitalist disjunction and displacement.

Intergenerational Tensions and the Burden of Authenticity

However, the pursuit of a de-territorialised, de-colonial identity is rife with fundamental internal conflicts. This study revealed a vast ideological divide between first-generation migrants and their foreign-born children regarding the meaning of "authentic" identity.

The use of language maintenance among first-generation parents frequently became a zero-sum proposition where the absence of fluent, spoken Khas-Nepali among their offspring became viewed as an existential cultural failure. This idealism had become translated into the policing speech of the home, creating great psychological pressure on the second generation. Here's how a nineteen-year-old living in London aptly explains this paradox:

When I talk in Nepali, people laugh at me for my accent, for sounding like a foreigner, and it does undermine my confidence, and it's tiring. "I'm not 'Nepali enough' for my family and not 'English enough' for my school friends when I'm here, so I just give up."

This insecurity around language is a stark example of the lingering colonial spectre of "the one, pure, correct language", even among the diaspora. The first generation's reproduction of the exact same

essentialist paradigms that oppressed them in their home country, by using language as an instrument of surveillance for an idealised and frozen motherland, only fuels the second generation's journey to decolonise the notion of authenticity.

In contrast, second-generation youths are actively subverting it by conceiving of language as an indicator not of perfect syntactical fluency but of emotional affinity, of being part of hybrid digital communities, and of intercultural solidarity. Speaking their native tongue "not because they are required to by tradition" but because it allows them to participate in multiple communicative realities makes their existence of "Global Himalayan" a fluid and open experience beyond the geographical limitations of Kathmandu, situated between worlds.

Conclusion

The global movement of the Nepali diaspora transformed the Himalaya from a landlocked geography to a fluid and transnational socio-linguistic space. As illustrated in this chapter, linguistic de-territorialisation destabilises existing socio-political hierarchies that have historically formed Nepali identities.

By moving beyond the territorial boundaries of the nation-state, the diaspora has successfully eroded the authoritative position of the institutionalised Khas-Nepali language; now it can evolve through productive structural hybridisation, digital transformation, and the Romanisation of vernacular registers. Simultaneously, this linguistic deterritorialisation allows a revolutionary decolonial moment for subaltern communities to resurrect suppressed languages and challenge the existing criteria of caste elite authenticity and provides the necessary linguistic tools for marginalised and subaltern workers to survive global capital.

Despite these ongoing multi-generational struggles over language, younger generations are actively rewriting their heritage. They are building a fresh "Global Himalayan" identity. This new sense of belonging isn't about living near physical mountains anymore or forcing yourself to conform to a single national language. This isn't based on shared tales, mixing and blending creative language, but on the global community. A vision that could revolutionise Nepal and, indeed, the globe.

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[22] Restoring the Indigenous Pulse: A Pedagogical Framework for Psychological Decolonisation among the Youth

Abstract

Young Indigenous peoples learn from the contemporary school and media to perceive themselves through an alien Western view of themselves. Through doing this, they alienate themselves from the teachings of their ancestors, indigenous languages and land. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce an alternative way of teaching to assist Indigenous and other marginalised young people in unlearning such conditionings. Through a combination of oral storytelling, guest talks from elders and outdoor experiences, our collaboration with several young people's groups over a period of 14 months revealed that unlearning such colonial concepts and ways of thinking requires much more than book learning. It also necessitates an emotional as well as a bodily reconnect with one's own communal roots; young people cease to feel ashamed of their heritages and start feeling pride in who they are as a result of the classroom engaging in local ways of knowing. This chapter then presents a concrete, usable framework with which to move beyond superficial forms of multiculturalism and engage in practices that lead to freedom of the mind.

Keywords: Psychological Decolonisation, Indigenous Pedagogy, Youth Liberation, Land-Based Learning, Intergenerational Wisdom.

Introduction

Step into most classrooms today, and you will see a quiet crisis taking place among Indigenous and other oppressed young people. The chalkboards look different, and the textbooks are on computers, yet the dominant content of the education remains profoundly Eurocentric. Formal education over generations has been a conduit for assimilation; it quietly taught youth that to move forward, they must leave the past behind. Their languages are dismissed as "regional dialects", their cosmologies as "folklore", and their methods of healing as "superstition".

This did not happen by accident. This is the enduring imprint of coloniality. Although formal empires have mostly dismantled themselves and gone home, their systems of knowing remain firmly in place (Mignolo, 2011). The impact of this dynamic creates a powerful sense of psychological alienation. Young people who are trained to see, speak, and measure success from the viewpoint of the historical colonisers learn to perceive themselves as deficit communities to overcome, and they lose their pulse – that sense of an embodied, resonant link to land, language, and lineage that sustains community resilience across generations.

Psychological decolonisation – that is, the gradual, purposeful undoing of colonial conditioning and the clearing away of colonial cobwebs in the mind so that youth can begin to see themselves clearly once again (Fanon, 1963; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986). This chapter will offer an actionable, heart-centred pedagogical framework to begin to awaken this internal shift within young people. By changing the classroom from an intellectual site of compliance to a space of ancestral recovery, we can support youth in reclaiming their voices and stepping into their power.

Rationale

Most institutions of learning are quick to laud "diversity"; it appears in brochures, mission statements, and the hiring of diversity coordinators but is only superficially implemented. Diversity as tokenism does not penetrate to the very core of colonial conditioning. Filling a syllabus with a couple of authors from marginalised backgrounds does not change a system that is inherently grounded in competitive individualism, extraction from land, and objectification of humans. It is a quick and superficial fix that allows institutions to present themselves as progressive while ensuring that the dominance of Eurocentric ways of knowing remains entirely unchallenged (Grande, 2015).

Superficial efforts to integrate diversity leave youth caught between a globalised world that continues to demand that they adapt and a homeland whose language they have been shamed into believing is less valid. The mental health consequences of being fractured between these worlds, of experiencing the stigma of inferiority, have become devastating. Anxiety, depression, an identity crisis, and despair are commonplace responses when an individual has been stripped of their community connections.

We must move beyond mere representation and beyond liberal pedagogies in our attempt to repair the psychological damage that colonial schooling has inflicted. If we do not attempt to heal the internalised sense of inferiority the school has engendered, our political and social projects will continue to fall flat. This chapter seeks to provide an accessible, replicable guide for doing this deeper work. It will explain how we can transform classroom practice from a site that internalises colonial harm to a site that is capable of enabling psychological decolonisation through an affirmation of the Indigenous pulse.

Structure of Theory

This framework incorporates ideas from radical psychology, anti-colonial philosophy, and Indigenous epistemologies and worldviews to turn the classroom into a healing environment. Three main pillars structure this study:

The coloniality of being and knowing

Nelson Maldonado-Torres has explained the coloniality of being, which is defined as the structure in which some human lives become "less than human, less real and less rational" because of colonial power dynamics (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). The coloniality of knowing that plays out within educational systems leads to an assumption that only knowledge that has been validated, written, quantitatively measured, and approved by a Western institution can serve as authoritative and real truth. The Indigenous approaches of story-telling, somatic knowing, and ancestral dreaming were shut out of the room in formal education and are therefore not "truth". An anti-colonial pedagogy will break the seal on this epistemological vault, valuing the Indigenous elder, the community wisdom-keeper, not as a relic or object to be preserved but as a living professor and scholar of survival.

Psychopolitical Liberation

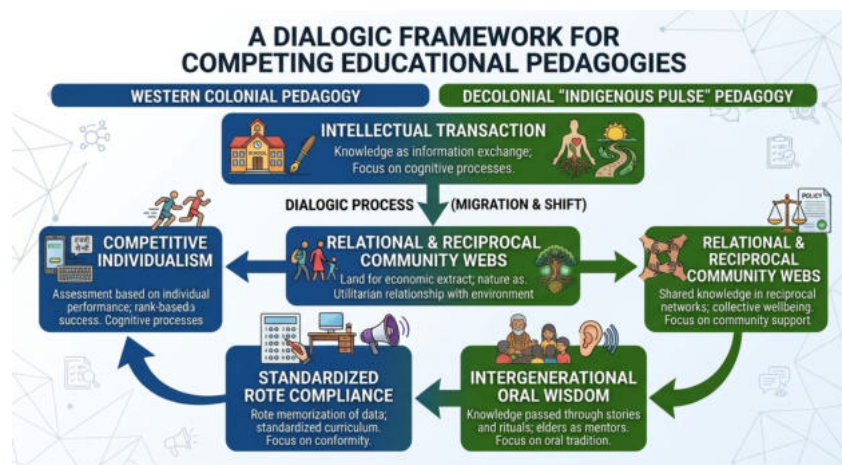
Both Frantz Fanon and Ignacio Martín-Baró have argued that it is not enough to only address mental distress at the individual level when a whole society is oppressive. Mental well-being and the capacity to think critically require that oppression be addressed at all levels, including the psychological dimension (Martín-Baró, 1994; Fanon, 1963). When young people's anxieties and self-consciousness around language and identity are interpreted as personal failures, they are experiencing a deeply psychological aspect of

being colonised. Psychological liberation involves helping youth to see that these crises are not failures at all but a direct result of systems designed to keep them fractured from themselves and their ancestors.

Indigenizing Pedagogy: Root Systems

Western pedagogical approaches tend to approach learning as a solitary, cognitive task. Instead, Indigenous pedagogies describe learning as relational and circular. This kind of learning is not a whole-body process and not an intellectual one that only happens in one's head (Cajete, 2000; Smith, 2012). Learning and knowing is intrinsically tied to the land for Indigenous people.

Indigenising Pedagogy: The Root Systems extends this concept by characterising learning as an embodied, relational nexus with the students on one end and the land, ancestors and community on the other, among other entities.



Methods

This study utilised a CAR design (Kemmis et al., 2014) to construct and test our pedagogical framework. Over the 14-month study period, we worked closely with 45 young people ages 16-24 from marginalised Indigenous communities across rural and peri-urban spaces.

Pedagogical Intervention

The intervention, named The Rooted Youth Workshop, was a nonformal education programme with no formal lectures and three core experiential modules:

1. Oral testimony circles to examine community histories, proverbs and songs with local elders rather than relying on textbooks;
2. Somatic land mapping, learning to read land, plants and ecosystems through spending concentrated time outside rather than in a classroom;
3. Critical counter-narratives in the form of participant-generated written works, speeches and digital media as a way of opposing mainstream representations of their communities.

Data Collection and Analysis

We used qualitative and conversational data collection methods, as we avoided formal, sterile research interviews. Data included:

- Talking circles, where participants reflected on what they learnt with their peers, were conducted at the end of each pedagogical module (n = 12).
- Individual reflective journals (written, recorded, or video), kept by each student throughout the 14 months.
- Field notes collected by two local educators, who served as insiders or co-researchers.

We analysed data using inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), paying specific attention to changes in the participants' language, self-worth and relationships to family and land.

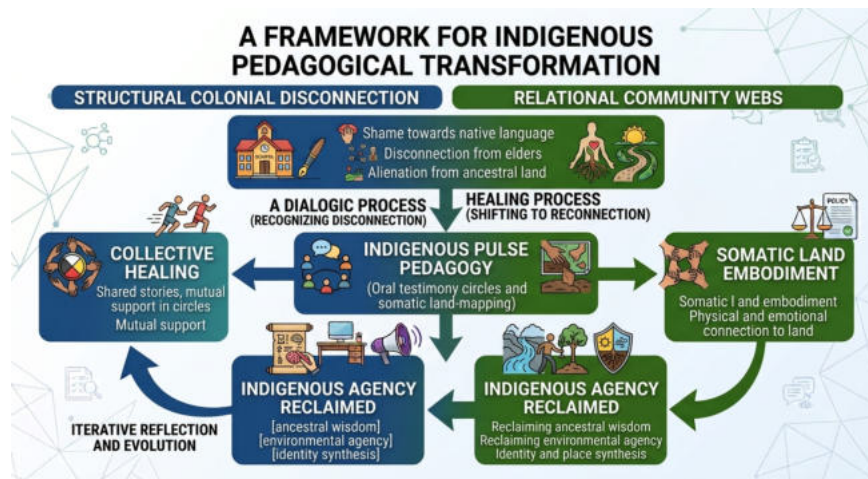
Findings and Analysis

De-colonising the language and shaking off the “deficit lens”

From the onset of the workshops, there was a silent internalised shame associated with the participants' background. Those whose backgrounds are rooted in rural, Indigenous cultures were reluctant to speak their mother tongues or talk about their families' traditional practices or occupations because they had internalised the discourse of advancement, meaning moving away from their culture. The oral testimony circles we conducted brought community elders who shared the sophisticated traditional science in simple day-to-day processes such as identifying weather through bird calls or farming techniques through complex multi-cropping patterns. This single act opened the window to another perspective:

“Before the workshop my teachers have been forcing me to believe my grandfather, as the sole patriarch in my family, is an uneducated farmer who does not know anything about the modern world. But when I heard about how he diverts water to the whole village without the use of a computer, I found out that he is indeed an engineer. The reason I have been viewing my community with a lens that is vacant.” (19 years old)

The incident was the opening step towards psychological decolonising. Shifting the centre from the dominant culture as the sole knower to the local community as the intellectual property transformed the students' world. What was previously perceived as a burden became a resource; what they were reluctant to be part of became something they now embrace as their identity.



Somatic Reconnection: The Land as a Co-Teacher

Western education isolates the body, seating children in precise rows of plastic chairs beneath the glare of fluorescence to stare at screens or whiteboards for hours. This corporeal imprisonment trains youth to see the earth either as a backdrop or as a commodity to be traded for cash. We designed the work to interrupt this order through somatic land mapping. We brought youth to denuded hillsides, traditional water sources, and sacred groves and asked them to listen, to touch the earth, to trace the lines of their histories etched onto the soil itself. We found that the body knows what the mind forgets.

"When you are inside a concrete room talking about identity, it feels like an argument," a 21-year-old reported after the body mapping session described above. It was just words until standing in a dry riverbed and listening to the elders describe it in a time it still flowed tightened my chest, making it about more than just learning about the climate crisis and more about the heartache I was feeling in my own body. I recognised then that the earth wasn't something external anymore – it was me.

It is this sort of recognition that leads to the understanding of why decolonisation cannot be taught with a textbook but must instead become a "pulsing Indigenous rhythm in my bones and in my muscles" that allows youth to step beyond the ivory tower.

Internalized Resistance and Intergenerational Discomfort

The mind-cleaning of colonialism isn't always pretty. We had our own challenges, including many instances of the youth's internal resistance throughout our 14 months together. We found that having grown up in standardised testing environments and within a hyper-competitive culture, the open-ended discussions and experiential approach left the youth confused and stressed. They craved the certitude of a rubric, right and wrong answers, and certificates to present to employers upon completion of the programme.

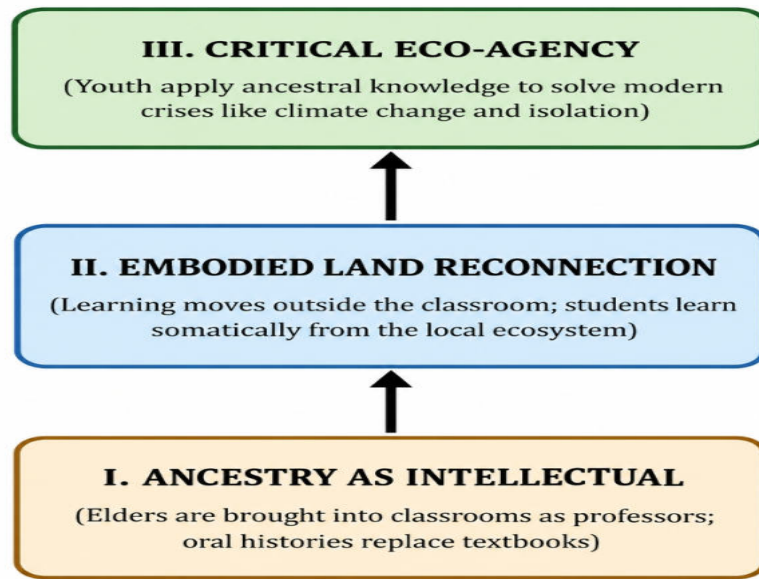
We also found a different kind of intergenerational tension at play. Many parents and family members, who had themselves sacrificed tremendously to give their children access to private, English-medium education in hopes they would rise out of poverty and never look back at their villages again, struggled to understand the youth's newfound fascination with the traditional ways. In his field journal, a community liaison described one evening:

"Parents looked at us with doubt. They would say, 'We sent our children to the city to study computer science and become fluent in English so they would get out of the mire. Why are you bringing them back to that dirt and the old stories?'"

This realisation gives insight to the ingrained ideology of a successful life as conceived through generations of colonial schooling. To resolve the conflict, we talked to the parents separately, trying to assure them that valuing traditions does not entail that we will not let our children pursue their modern knowledge of computer programming or bookkeeping, but rather it would give them a good foundation for the modern world.

Towards a pedagogical framework: reclaiming the pulse

Drawing from these observations and findings, we have developed the following practical, three-tiered pedagogical framework, accessible to any teacher who wishes to help restore the Indigenous pulse among their students.



Tier I: Ancestry as Intellectual Capital

It is time for educators to stop making local cultures mere stage props for pageants in schools. Elders must be invited into classrooms as co-teachers; oral traditions and shared memory and local dialects must all be seen as reliable and testable data. This step first deconstructs internal hierarchies and youth scorn for their own family and community.

Tier II: Somatic Land Reconnection

Learning must be removed from inside the building. Educators need to implement regular, somatically attuned learning experiences in which the local ecosystem is treated as the central text. Whether this is a community garden in a dense city or a community forest in a remote valley, youth must be allowed to engage in tactile contact with the earth in order to overcome the mental fragmentation born out of our hyper-digitalised colonial way of living.

Tier III: Critical Eco-Agency

Lastly, decolonial pedagogy must move forward rather than backwards. Retrieving the past for its own sake alone is a useless and narcissistic exercise in navel-gazing. Youth should be guided to utilise their recovered ancestral knowledge for contemporary crises such as displacement due to climate change, alienation and economic exploitation. Once youth discover that ancestral ways of knowing provide viable answers to the problems facing global communities today, the psychological process of decolonisation is complete. Youth will transform from historical victims into future-builders.

Conclusion

Psychological decolonisation does not imply time travel or a return to a mythical past. It is about excavating our minds so that we can better grasp the present. This present moment, marked by ecological crisis and pervasive social fragmentation, points out the inadequacy of a European, extractivist model of knowledge and living. Real education should do more than prepare youth for the rigours of an economic

machine; it must nourish youth's sense of self, meaning and community. By Re-inscribing the local, oral-storytelling, intergenerational engagement and somatic land connection into our learning environments, we achieve more than just the history of local people. We recover for our youth an ancestral rhythm which provides their minds and spirits with strength, lucidity and bravery to bring healing to our shattered world.

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Author Introduction

A confluence of literature, music, public health, and anthropology: Dr. Nawaraj Subba's multifaceted intellectual legacy.

Dr. Nawa Raj Subba is a name known for a rare blend of scientific rigour and tribal heart. His journey as a distinguished Nepali researcher-writer has spanned five decades of literary creation and 35 years of dedicated service in the Ministry of Health, Government of Nepal. With a PhD in Health Psychology and master's degrees in both Public Health and Nepali Literature, Dr. Subba has a unique dual perspective—where on one hand he analyses the modern human condition as an expert, and on the other hand he revives the ancient worldly wisdom of the Himalayas as a philosopher.



His work, which has made the cultural milieu of Biratnagar his work space, has served as an important bridge between the analytical demands of the 21st century and the primitive oral tradition of Mundhum. Whether diagnosing the “invisible pressures” of public health or composing patriotic songs, Dr. Subba's contributions have always been rooted in the belief that the health of any nation is inextricably linked to its cultural identity.

1. Literary publications (more than 15 works published)

A Journey of Half a Century: A comprehensive poetic reflection on five decades of personal and national transition. *Waking Up in the Middle*: A collection of deeply symbolic poems that explores identity and human sensibilities. *Dialogue Between the Sky and the Soul* (2025): Philosophical prose exploring the relationship between consciousness and the infinite universe.

2. Anthropological work (published more than 11 works) He has published works including *Kirat Mundhum*, *Yuma Mundhum*, *Tungdunge Mundhum*, *Sam Upma Mundhum*, *Kirat Limbu Culture*, and the history of the Sen dynasty, *Samba Phayang Vansavali*.

3. Public Health and Behavioural Sciences (More than 9 works)

Drawing on 35 years of experience in the health sector, Dr. Subba has written on the psychological foundations of public health and social well-being.

Anxiety: The Invisible Pressure on Public Health: A critical analysis of the mental health crisis in modern Nepali society.

Healthy Behaviour (2024): A complete guide to health based on lifestyle and traditional knowledge.

Health-seeking behaviour of the Rajbanshi community: A basic study conducted in the field of medical anthropology.

4. Music and Communication: Timeless Rhythms (over 10 albums)

As an established lyricist, he has infused Nepali soft music and national songs with such philosophical depth that it directly touches the Nepali soul.

Love of the country and Nepali first: timeless songs imbued with the spirit of national unity and patriotism.

Hidden Desires: A brilliant presentation of the ghazal genre that expresses the hidden desires of the human heart.

Reflections Series: A visual and audio documentation of his musical and cultural journey.

The importance of his work today

In today's post-modern era, globalisation and linguistic imperialism are rapidly swallowing up indigenous identity. Created from an academic consciousness established in such a transitional period, this work, "The Politics of the Nepali Language and Decolonial Discourse: Purification and Indigenous Knowledge Systems", serves as a powerful intellectual intervention to awaken linguistic indigeness.

The author does not limit language to a mere medium of communication or grammatical rules. He presents it as a political link between caste, power, and historical oppression. The linguistic-anthropological distinction made here between the 'raw bone' (native foundation) within the internal structure of the Nepali language and the 'Sanskrit skin' (hierarchical cover) forcibly placed over it paves the way for the decolonisation of our thinking.

This book encourages the new generation to recognise their linguistic roots and native aesthetics. The author not only expresses concern over the endangered status of the indigenous language but also suggests technical measures to preserve and promote it. This attempt to find freedom of language by combining art, literature, and indigenous knowledge into a single formula is a very important intellectual asset in today's time of mechanical and cultural distancing.

For ages, one narrative has set the terms for identity in the Central Himalayas – that the Nepali language is the authentic "daughter of Sanskrit", originating in the hills of Khas, of pristine origin and civilised by institutional standardisation by only elites. However, upon peeling off the layer of state institution-driven polish, what lies beneath?

Bones and Skin: A Decolonial History and the Indigenous Foundations of the Nepali Language is an outstanding and evidence-based counter-attack against a hundred-year-long elite scholarly paradigm by none other than the pioneering scholar, Dr Nawa Raj Subba. Shifting conventional linguistic scholarship from its head, Dr. Subba employs an astute metaphor in that the bones of Nepali grammatical structure, phonology and existentials – all sprout from the earthy indigenous Tibeto-Burman, Magar, Newar, Kiranti and Mundhumi knowledge base. The Sanskrit-Tatsam loan words are nothing but a historically imposed, thin and transparent "skin" layered over this dynamic, multi-hued "bone".

With a scope of 22 robust chapters, this work interweaves historical sociology, the Sinja Empire's inscriptions, 2078 B.S. National Census findings and digital humanities. Through this book, we will learn how "purism" by the elites becomes a weapon of internal colonialism, and we will get the map for how the Nepali language itself has lived its hybrid, translanguistic life through the realities of the modern global diaspora. *Bones and Skin* is not only a linguistic critique, but it's also a decolonial manifesto to free the Nepali language from the fetters of institutional politics.

- Technologicalization and open access to the Limbu language (Sirijanga script) and the Mundhum knowledge system (Open Access) How to spread for global human welfare through.

A must-read document for every reader, writer, and researcher who wants to understand the politics, history, legal sociology, and digital future of the Nepali language from a new perspective!

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